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Sesquicentennial, Carmi, Illinois,  
1816-1966.

(1966)

ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SURVEY



**CARMI**  
**ILLINOIS**  
**1816 • 1966**  
**SESQUICENTENNIAL**



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# SESQUICENTENNIAL

## CARMI, ILLINOIS

### 1816 -- 1966



Published by the Carmi Sesquicentennial Commission, Inc.

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This souvenir booklet of Carmi's 150th birthday was made possible by many enthusiastic people — those who graciously loaned old pictures, women who collected the photos, the staff of the Carmi Times, the sponsors, members of the Business and Professional Women's Club, who enlisted the support of the sponsors, and the author, J. Robert Smith.

*Glimpses down the decades . . .*

S

HOULD YOU ASK ME, whence these stories; whence these legends and traditions—of the pioneer in buckskin;

with the hitching racks and ox teams; of the cobblestones and candles, and the grinding of the corn mill—where the Little Wabash wanders in and out of old White County?

I should answer, I should tell you: from the eager lips long silent; from the hist'ry of the county, from the vaults where ledgers moulder; from the files of crumbling papers.

Here we read and pored and pondered; read some more and then recorded. We repeat them as we found them, all these stories and traditions.

Now we cherish, save and guard them.

\* \* \*                      \* \* \*

Your Sesquicentennial book is not a history.

Although it starts before the beginning of Carmi, no attempt was made to write a complete chronological story about people and events of the past 150 years.

We present here a few glances backward down the decades; attempting to preserve in words and pictures the ways of life of dear hearts and gentle people—our ancestors.

*My name is Carmi . . .*

I

AM 150 years old, and you are celebrating.

Oh, how the years have sped by!

I was born in a wilderness, beside a meandering stream. Attending my birth were pioneers in buckskin, linsey-woolsey and calico. They walked and rode horseback from Carolina, Kentucky, Pennsylvania and Virginia.



I was born in Lowry Hay's log cabin near the Little Wabash River. It was February 8, 1816—a cold, raw day. The winter wind moaned through cracks in the cabin. Close by, the grist mill's water wheel creaked as it turned.

My christening came on a bright April day. On the sixteenth people met at the log house of John Craw. Dr. Josiah Stewart was there. With him were Daniel and Lowry Hay. Leonard White arrived. The county had been named for him. Now it was time to name the town—me!

I am told that many names were suggested. Just who opened the Bible I do not know. Perhaps it was the Rev. John C. Slocumb, a Methodist minister. Genesis 46:9 . . . Exodus 6:14 . . . Numbers 26:6 . . . Joshua 7:1, 18 . . . First Chronicles 2:7, 4:1, 5:3. In all those passages one finds the name of the son of Reuben, the grandson of Jacob, the nephew of Joseph.

And so, a log cabin settlement in the forest was named Carmi.

Who am I? For what do I stand?

I am more than 6,000 people, and the spirit of thousands of others who lived, labored, loved and died here the past 150 years. My sons and daughters remember me with affection as they have gone out to the far places of the world. Many return to visit or retire.

I am a log village on a muddy, rutted road, and a modern city with wide, paved streets. My way has been lighted down the decades by pine knots, candles, kerosene, gas and electricity.

I can still hear the whirring wheel spinning flax and wool; the clicking loom weaving linsey-woolsey; creaking wagons drawn by oxen; hoof beats of circuit riders' horses; the lonely howl of the timber wolf; the coachman's horn as the stage approaches; the whistle of steamboats on the Little Wabash.

I can still smell venison roasting on the spit; corn bread baking on the coals; hickory burning in the fireplace.

My first settlers told me about the violent earthquakes of 1811 and 1812; how the ground shook and rocked and then rolled like waves of the sea. They told me about the "harraken" of 1815—a cyclone that mowed down the forest in a path a mile wide.

I remember November 12, 1833, "the night the stars fell," when the wife of Chief Justice William E. Wilson went outside to gaze in wonder; to wash her hands and face with stars, as though they had been snow flakes, then bathed her baby's face with stardust.

I am the Little Wabash River and Shipley Hill; 'Possum Road and the old Shawneetown Trail; the tan yard and distillery and pioneer ferry.





I am Joseph Pomeroy and Benjamin R. Smith; Doctors Josiah Stewart and Thomas Shannon, Daniel P. Berry and William Brimble-Combe, Frank Sibley and R. C. Brown; Lieutenant Governor William H. Davidson and Attorney General Ivan A. Elliott.

I am Willis Hargrave, who rode horseback from Equality to find my birthplace, and Chamber of Commerce President Albert W. McCallister, who flies to distant cities to look after my interests.

I remember the men enlisting for the Black Hawk and Mexican wars; the excitement and sadness of the Civil War; the Spanish war volunteers of 1898; the troop trains of 1917; the casualty lists of the 1940's and 1950's. And now, Vietnam!

I am Ratcliff Inn and the Damron House; the Robinson home and the Old Graveyard; the Reinwald and Ziegler stave factory and the Staley mill; the Ainsbrooke Corporation and Sterling Aluminum; the Innovation and Burrell's Woods.

You can look at me and see State Senator Edwin B. Webb crossing the dusty street to board a stagecoach for Springfield; U. S. Senator John M. Robinson riding in the fancy brougham he bought in Baltimore.

I am the Home Culture Circle starting a library in 1898; the Thursday and Friday clubs of years gone by; the D.A.R. and its Memorial Circle in the Old Cemetery.

I am Colonel John M. Whiting and General Frederick J. Karch; Congressmen John M. Crebs, James R. Williams, Orlando Burrell and Roy Clippinger; Ephraim Joy and Charles Berry; Dr. Elam Stewart, my first mayor, and Laurence Boehringer, the present mayor; Nathaniel Holderby and Roy E. Pearce.

I am Colonel Everton Conger capturing John Wilkes Booth and C. F. (Bud) Rebstock bringing a new industry to town;

William Stewart, long at rest in the Old Graveyard, and Herbert G. Bayley, devoting years to civic work.

I am Benjamin St. John and John G. Powell, Adam Miller and North Storms, Doctors J. I. Spicknall and Ray McCallister, A. S. Rudolph and Edwin Stocke. I am Frank J. Foster and Allen Ball.

I can still hear Abraham Lincoln speaking in Stewart's Grove in 1840; the eloquence of William Jennings Bryan down by the depot in 1896; the Missouri twang of Harry Truman beside the courthouse in 1948; the clipped sentences of Dwight Eisenhower at the back of the campaign train in 1948.

I remember the covered bridge of 1840; the flood of 1913; the tornado's roar in 1925.

I am the Historical Society saving Ratcliff Inn; the Kiwanis Club on Corn Day; the Rotary Club at its annual barbecue; the Lions Club at its hamburger stand at the White County Fair.

Yes, I am 150 years old—but I am young!

The past has been gracious and good, but my eyes are on the future. I cherish the past but look forward eagerly to my next 150 years.

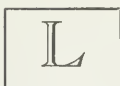
What will I be in the year 2116?

Look in the mirror.

There is your answer.



## *Before the beginning . . .*



ONG BEFORE there was a Carmi, Indians lived here.

Through their village ran a trail to a ford in the river. Eastward it went through tall prairie grass to the Ouabache River. Westward it plunged into the deep, dark forest; forked southward to La Belle Riviere and west to the Mississippi.

Braves loafed in the sunshine. Squaws skinned deer, tended fires, carried water from the stream, worked in corn rows, picked pumpkins and squash. Children played with dogs and splashed in the river.

Shawnees, Piankeshaws and Potawatomis prowled prairie and forest, as free as foxes and deer. They left the land unchanged. The river ran crystal clear, swift and deep. The forest remained uncut, unspoiled.

Giant oaks, maples, walnuts, chestnuts, sycamores and sweet gums reared skyward. They were so dense they shut out the light; left the forest floor in green shadow. Grape vines as big as a man's thigh snaked high into the trees.

This place was wildly beautiful. Whippoorwills called. Beavers built dams. Wolves howled. Passenger pigeons flew in flocks of millions. There were deer and bears in abundance.

East of the river, prairie grasses rippled as the waves of the sea. In springtime the prairies glowed with scarlet lilies, yellow cowslips, sweet William and violets. When the bluestem and Indian grasses grew in the summer sun they were high enough to hide a man on horseback.

From the Ouabache River the prairie sea rolled westward to the Petite Ouabache, then stopped—right here!

West of the river was the forest sea—a mighty green ocean of trees, billowing and rolling in the ridges, hills and knobs of southern Illinois.

To the Indians, this land was beautiful, bountiful and old . . . old.

To the pioneers pushing westward, it was wild, bleak and — new!



## *The beginning . . .*

F

IRST CAME the trappers and hunters, seeking fur and game.

And then the land-lookers, wanting to settle. Daniel Bain, a Revolutionary War soldier from Virginia, pushed into this area in 1806. He sired 18 children; was step-father of six more.

Others built on the Big Prairie—Peter Kuykendall in 1808; Robert Land, Thomas Miller, Henry Jones, James Garrison, Thomas Gray and the Rev. Daniel McHenry in 1809.

Isaac Veach arrived that year. He turned his back on the prairie; crossed the Little Wabash; built his cabin on the bluff overlooking the river. It stood just south of what is now Carmi's Main Street bridge.

People kept arriving at Big Prairie. In 1810, John Hanna, Captain William McHenry, Benjamin Mobley, Daniel Boultinghouse.

Perhaps they laughed at Isaac Veach. Why didn't he choose rich, level land? Why build a home at the edge of the forest?

Most land-lookers wanted not only good soil but running water. They sought locations beside a river or creek. That is where towns were started.

The year 1811 was one of trouble and terror. Indians were killing and scalping. Tecumseh was trying to unite all tribes for war. "This is our land," he told General William Henry Harrison at Vincennes.

Potawatomi started scalping in Illinois. Gen. Harrison planned an invasion of Indian territory. People on the prairie hurried to build blockhouses for protection. Frightened families fled to these forts built by Robert Land, John Hanna, Capt. William McHenry, Hardy Council, Aaron Williams and John Slocumb.

Going to their corn patches, men carried guns; leaned them against stumps. They armed themselves before shepherding their families to worship services in log cabin homes.



The attacks did come. In one raid on a cabin near here Indians killed two men and wounded four.

A flaming comet swept the skies that summer. Worried settlers gazed in awe and consternation.

### FIERY SKY, TREMBLING EARTH

Then came that terrifying December 16.

It was 2 a.m. Monday. Settlers slept.

Suddenly, the earth shook. Cabins shuddered. Logs creaked. Cradles rocked. Chimneys cracked. Bells rang. Clocks stopped. Dishes crashed.

Cattle bawled. Dogs howled. Horses panicked.

People fled from their cabins; huddled in the cold. Parents prayed. Children cried.

The ground rolled in waves. Trees blew up, cracked, split, fell by the thousands. When earth waves hit the tall timber, forest giants weaved their tops together, interlocked their branches, sprang back and cracked like whip lashes.

The earth rumbled, roared, split open, raised in some places, sank in others. On the prairie, snow-white sand shot up like geysers.

Along the Wabash and Little Wabash Rivers banks caved in. Trees toppled into the water. Mrs. Edward McCallister hurried her children into a dugout canoe, pushed it into the Wabash River. Violent waves forced her to struggle back to the heaving land.

The earth shook all night and the following day. Tremors continued for three months, with massive shocks January 23 and February 7.

The praying pioneers didn't know it, but they had experienced the heaviest earthquake ever to shake the American continent. It shook 1,000,000 square miles; rang church bells in Boston; toppled chimneys in Charleston, S. C.; frightened people in New Orleans, Washington, D. C., Louisville and Cincinnati.

## WAR BREAKS OUT

While the earth still trembled Indians harried the countryside. The War of 1812 broke out. A company of mounted U. S. Rangers rode into the area; built a block-house; guarded the settlers for two years.

Men named Williams and Weed arrived here in 1812. They looked at Veach's cabin on the river bluff and liked the location. They felled trees, burned brush, built a log dam and crude water mill, opened a trading post, started a tannery, added a distillery.

Until then the closest mill was at New Haven. Now, from miles around people came to the new mill on the Little Wabash. They brought their corn by canoe, on horseback and on foot.

The late W. D. Hay talked with a Wayne County man whose people traveled to the Williams and Weed mill seven years before there was a Wayne County.

A certain settler, tired of pounding his corn into meal by hand in an Indian mortar, walked more than 30 miles to the mill, carrying a bushel of corn strapped on his shoulders.

It took three days to make the round trip. He spent two nights alone in the woods; killed and cooked food when hungry, arrived home tired but happy.

Beside the mill, the tannery was turning out leather. The distillery was producing whisky. The trading post was exchanging powder, lead, liquor, coffee and calico for corn, coonskins, venison hams, deerskins, ginseng and hogs.

News of this activity reached New Haven, Shawneetown and Equality. "Hm-m-m," said folks down there, "is a new settlement about to start in our county?"

## LEADERS WERE WAITING

Leaders of men were living at Equality, Shawneetown and the U. S. Saline in those days. Fortunes were being made and lost at the salt works. Waves of migration rolled westward, swept through the Wilderness Road and down the Ohio River in flatboats.

Shawneetown was the principal port of entry into the vast Illinois Territory. Among the impoverished pioneers were men of substance and education. They became the natural leaders.

There was Captain Leonard White, U. S. agent at the Saline; former postmaster there; erstwhile judge of the court of common pleas.

James Ratcliff, a Virginia gentleman, succeeded White as postmaster.

Ratcliff's father-in-law was Colonel Willis Hargrave. Governor Ninian Edwards appointed him commander of the 4th Regiment militia. His property included numerous slaves.

In the frontier excitement of Shawneetown, Equality and the U. S. Saline one could find Joseph Pomroy, John Craw, Lowry Hay and his nephew, John; Hargrave's sons, George and Samuel; his sons-in-law, Ratcliff, Benjamin White and James A. Richardson.

There was talk at Kaskaskia that the Territorial Assembly was going to divide Gallatin County. Well! That would mean a new county seat.

Big plans were soon afoot. Leonard White and Lowry Hay got their heads together. They formed some sort of partnership. Hay and his nephew, John, took over the Williams and Weed mill, tannery and distillery.

White built a log storehouse near Hay's mill. George Hargrave started a store there.

John Craw built a two-room log house back in the woods. (This is now the enlarged, beautified home of Miss Mary Jane Stewart.)

On October 16, 1814, John Hay entered the northeast quarter of Section 13. Through it ran the Little Wabash River. On it stood the mill, tannery, distillery; the log homes of Craw and Veach; the White-Hargrave store. (The greater part of Carmi now occupies Section 13.)

## OWNERS WERE WHITE AND HAY

It was soon learned that Lowry Hay and Leonard White were the joint proprietors of the proposed town site. On Nov. 29, 1815, Willis Hargrave bought 40 acres in Section 13 and 40 in Section 14.

More and more people were coming to trade and have their corn ground. The place had no name. Settlers said they were going to Hay's Mill or to Hargrave's store.

And then it happened. On December 9, 1815, White County was created. Governor Edwards appointed the officials for the new county:

Judges of the County Commissioners Court, Willis Hargrave, Joseph Pomroy and the Rev. John C. Slocumb;

County clerk and recorder, James Ratcliff;

Commissioners to fix the seat of justice, Hargrave's sons-in-law, Ratcliff and Benjamin White; Stephen E. Hogg and Samuel Hays;

Colonel of the 5th Regiment county militia, Willis Hargrave;

Surveyor, Lowry Hay; sheriff, Benjamin R. Smith; justices of the peace, Lowry Hay, William Nash, the Rev. Daniel McHenry, Stephen Standly, Thomas Rutledge, Edmond Covington, Moses Thompson and Thomas Randolph.

It was all set. Hay, White and Hargrave owned 220 acres. The grist mill was busy. Cabins were going up. Why, the place would soon rival New Haven as a trading center!

About this time Daniel Hay was on the move again. The 34-year-old Virginian was dissatisfied with life in Butler County, Kentucky.

He had a growing family; told his wife, Priscilla, he longed to go to the Illinois country, perhaps as far north as the Sangamon River.

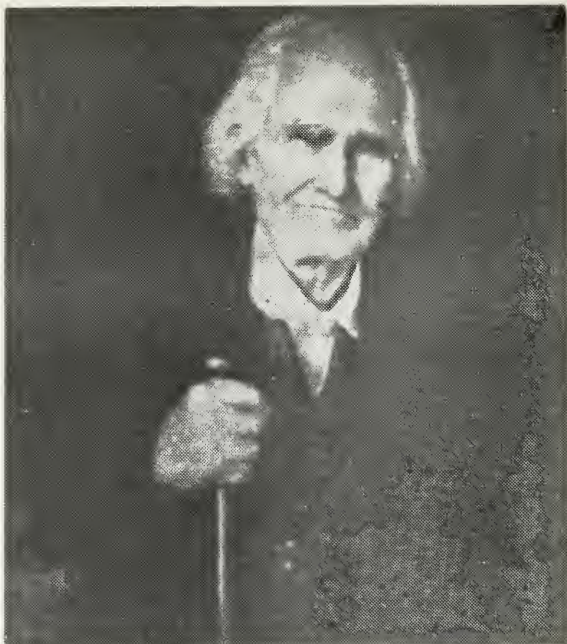
In the winter of 1815-1816, Hay saddled his horse, bid his family farewell and rode northward. He would explore the new land, decide on a location, then return for his family.

He crossed the river at Shawneetown; rode on to Equality. In the French settlement he paused to listen to men talking about a new county being organized. It was named for Leonard White. And there was Captain White!

Yes, he said he already had interests up there. On the Little Wabash River he and Lowry Hay had a mill going. They had entered land; were going to build a town—a county seat!

Why not settle there? Go along with us!

Hay then talked with Willis Hargrave. Forget the Sangamon, Hay was advised. Get in on the ground floor of this venture. We're leaving soon.



One of Carmi's earliest pioneers was William Stewart, a Revolutionary War soldier who served in the company of his father, Captain Matthew Stewart. The family left North Carolina and settled near Marion, Kentucky, before coming to Carmi. William Stewart was the father of Dr. Josiah Stewart and grandfather of Dr. Elam L. Stewart, Carmi's first mayor. He died in 1856 at the age of 93 and is buried in the Old Graveyard.

#### EIGHT MEN RIDE NORTHWARD

It was a cold winter morning in 1816. Eight men on horseback rode out of Equality; took the trail toward New Haven. Daniel Hay was with them. Col. Hargrave led the way, followed by Capt. Leonard White; Hargrave's sons, George and Samuel; sons-in-law, Benjamin White, James A. Richardson and James Ratcliff.

It was a long ride. Perhaps they dismounted at New Haven for rest and refreshments; talked with Joseph Boone, Samuel Dagley and Paddy Robinson; then pushed onward up the snowy trail.

Dusk or darkness must have fallen by the time they arrived at Hay's mill. Tired horses whinnied at the sight of candle light, the smell of feed.

Weary riders were cheered to see smoke spiraling from cabin chimneys; to think of hot corn bread and venison stew.

Cabin doors opened. People ran out to welcome the new arrivals; ask for news from the outside world.

Now! A county seat must be selected. Guess where it would be?

On Monday morning, Feb. 5, the four commissioners met in Lowry Hay's cabin near the mill. They talked all day; met again Tuesday and Wednesday, discussing "the settlements, the geography of the county, the convenience of the people and the eligibility of the situation."

By Thursday, Feb. 8, they had made their decision; were ready to draft their report. The county seat would be right here at this settlement without a name.

Now to make it legal. The county commissioners—Hargrave, Pomroy and Slocumb—must meet and accept the report. The following Monday, Feb. 12, they went to Hay's house. The Rev. Mr. Slocumb opened the first county court session with prayer.

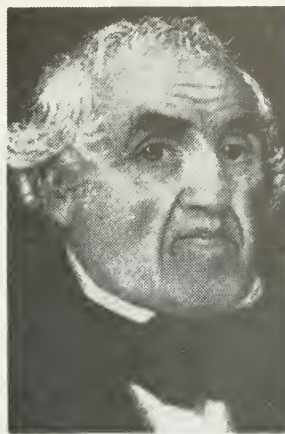
### 20 ACRES GIVEN FOR TOWN

They looked at a crude map of the large new county. It extended from the Wabash River westward into what is now Hamilton, Franklin and part of Jefferson.

They divided the area into three townships—Prairie, Fox River and West—appointed overseers of the poor, constables and fence viewers. After a long day they adjourned.



The next morning James Ratcliff, county clerk, and Benjamin R. Smith, sheriff, presented their official bonds. The judges then called for the report of the commission named to locate the seat of justice.



JAMES RATCLIFF

Ratcliff, White, Hogg and Hays recommended for the county seat a 40-acre tract in the northeast quarter of Section 13; announced that Leonard White and Lowry Hay would donate 20 of these acres to the county. A stake had been driven in the center to mark the public square.

The official surveyor, Lowry Hay, was ordered to lay off the town. Daniel McHenry was empowered to mark off lots and sell them.

And so, a town was born. People didn't know what to call it . . . Hay's Mill? . . . Hargrave's Store? No, a new county seat must have a good name; something with a meaning.

Did John Slocumb then start leafing through his Bible? Had he met the Wells family from Vermont? Far from their Eastern home, this pioneer family took up land in this area just before the town was formally established. Carmi Wells was the father's name, and the youngest of his children was named Carmi.

The Wells family moved on; settled in Wayne County, but they left their name here. The parents died and the grandfather came west to take the children back to Vermont.

Meeting at John Crow's log house on April 10, leaders decided to call the town Carmi, a name mentioned eight times in Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Joshua and First Chronicles.

## *The town grew and flourished . . .*

W

HITE COUNTY grew fast. By 1818 it passed Gallatin in population—3,529 to 3,348—and was the third most populous county in the state.

Settlers poured into Prairie, Fox River and West Townships. The forest echoed to axes. More and more cabins were built in Carmi. The western boundary was where the Methodist Church now stands—but that was 'way out in the country. And the country then was a forest!

Oh, the town was thriving. Lowry Hay added a sawmill. He and his nephew shipped whisky, pork and corn to New Orleans. The river front was a busy place when flatboats were being loaded.

James S. Graham started a ferry close to his hotel; opened a store and blacksmith shop.

George Webb and James Gray ran trading posts. They paid \$1 for pork barrels, 12½¢ a pound for deerskins, 4¢ a pound for hogs.

Settlers trading there found these prices:

Bacon 10¢ lb.; eggs 12½¢ a doz.; chickens 10¢ each; tallow 12½¢ lb.; salt 6¢ lb.; tea 2 ounces 37¢; coffee 50¢ lb.; sugar 32¢ lb.; soap 25¢ bar; wheat \$1 bu.;

Jack knife 37½¢; fish hooks 37½¢ doz.; looking glass 87½¢; flints 25¢ doz.; lead 25¢ lb.; powder \$1.25 lb.; curry comb 37½¢; nails 25¢ lb.; grindstone \$2.75; nails and planks for coffin 62½¢;

Socks 87½¢ pair; buttons 25 and 50¢ doz.; flannel 62½¢ yd.; broadcloth \$3 and \$4 yd.; linen \$1.25 yd.; silk \$1.50 yd.; needles 12½¢ doz.; oilcloth 75¢; bedspread \$2; ribbons 25¢ yd.; indigo 2 ounces 25¢.

### FRAME JAIL, NO COURTHOUSE

A frame jail was built (where the Municipal Building now stands) but the county still had no courthouse. Court was held in the home of John Craw.

The settlement had about 50 families. There were four taverns, operated by John Craw, Samuel Bozeman, John Lucas and Phillip Buckner, and three doctors, Thomas Shannon, Josiah Stewart and James E. Throckmorton.

The new county seat attracted lawyers. Riding into town in 1818 came John M. Robinson, 24, member of a distinguished Lexington, Ky., family.

Out of Virginia, via Shawneetown, came William E. Wilson. Since 1816 he had owned land southwest of town. Now in 1819 he brought his family here. Soon after arriving he was elected a Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court.

It was a log cabin village. There were no streets—only dirt roads, with short stumps standing in some places.

But there were dreams of beauty and gracious living even in a backwoods settlement. Many came here from Virginia and the Carolinas, where they had been accustomed to stately houses. They appreciated good architecture, art, literature and music.



### ENGLISH TRAVELER SURPRISED

An English traveler found it so. William N. Blane traveled in North America in 1822 and 1823; returned home to write a book about his journey. He tells in detail of a trip from Vincennes via Albion to St. Louis, then back via Carmi to New Harmony.

"The whole part of this part of the country," he wrote, "until within a few miles of the little village of Carmi, is very wild but thinly settled, but there is an abundance of game.

"I passed in a single day's ride as many as a dozen deer and five gangs of wild turkeys. There are also great numbers of wolves, wildcats and other vermin."

Blane tells of riding into the little log village, looking for a tavern where he might spend the night. He found one, "a very comfortable little tavern with a blazing fire."



Ratcliff Inn in the 1830's. Here is an artist's conception of Carmi's Main Street in stagecoach days, when Ratcliff Inn was new and considered one of the finest hotels in Illinois. Mrs. Nadine Childers won a blue ribbon for this painting in a contest sponsored by the White County Historical Society. Mrs. Frances Raester won a blue ribbon for her painting of Ratcliff Inn during the 1880's.

He asked the landlord if there was anything to read. The host smiled and bowed; returned with a volume of Goldsmith and Scotch novels, "The Traveller" and "The Deserted Village."

Blane expressed surprise and pleasure at finding books in the log tavern in the little backwoods village.

Numerous settlers here were people of property. They owned slaves, who helped them carve homes out of the wilderness. In 1818 there were 52 slaves in the county, and most of them were in Carmi.

Willis Hargrave owned 14; James Ratcliff, 5; James Gray, 4; Samuel Hargrave, 3. Lowry Hay had two, who worked at the mill, tannery and distillery. Two slaves of James S. Graham ran his ferry, helped at his store and tavern. Even John Slocumb, the minister, owned one slave.

#### COURTHOUSE STARTED

As the town grew, better dwellings were erected. Leonard White built a handsome two-story house with ell and porches. It was near the ravine on Main Cross

Street two blocks north of the present courthouse.

White plunged into politics; defeated Hargrave for the State Senate. More lawyers arrived. Edwin B. Webb and his brother George were admitted to the bar.

The 1820's found Carmi flowering into one of the state's important towns. The county population grew to 4,828, compared to Gallatin's 3,155.

The Presbyterians organized a church. Allen Rudolph started building a two-story brick courthouse. James Ratcliff built one of the finest hotels in Illinois.

What a sight the tavern must have been—a two-story brick with a charming Federal entrance. "Old Beaver" Ratcliff was busy—county clerk, probate judge, postmaster, storekeeper and hotel owner.

Folks still fretted because there was no bridge across the river. County officials had been trying to get one built since 1819. In 1829 Allen Rudolph—still building the courthouse—gave a \$500 bond to construct a covered bridge. Timbers were hauled to the site, but the project was abandoned. The lumber was used to build houses.

## *The 1830's -- a glorious decade . . .*

T

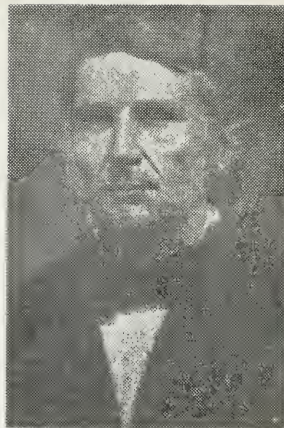
HE TOWN kept growing; had 400 residents in 1830. In one year the county revenue totaled \$975.09. Dr. Josiah Stewart came into court and paid his taxes, exactly 60c on 40 acres adjoining the town. (This land is now the center of Carmi's residential district).

A Yankee peddler, Oliver Holcomb, was charged \$50 for a three month license to sell wooden clocks. Samuel D. Ready, Davidson and Kearny and Wilmans and Weed paid \$15 for yearly licenses to sell foreign goods. A general merchandise license cost \$6. This included the right to sell whisky in amounts over one gallon. Stores dispensing by the drink or in quantities less than a gallon paid \$50.

There were several taverns in Carmi and one at almost every country crossroad.



SENATOR JOHN M. ROBINSON



SENATOR EDWIN B. WEBB

### ROBINSON ELECTED SENATOR

Excitement ran through the village in the winter of 1831. A Carmi man was going to the U. S. Senate!

Since arriving here in 1818, John M. Robinson had become a noted lawyer and one of the leading political figures of Illinois. The Legislature elected him to the Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the death of David J. McLean of Shawneetown.

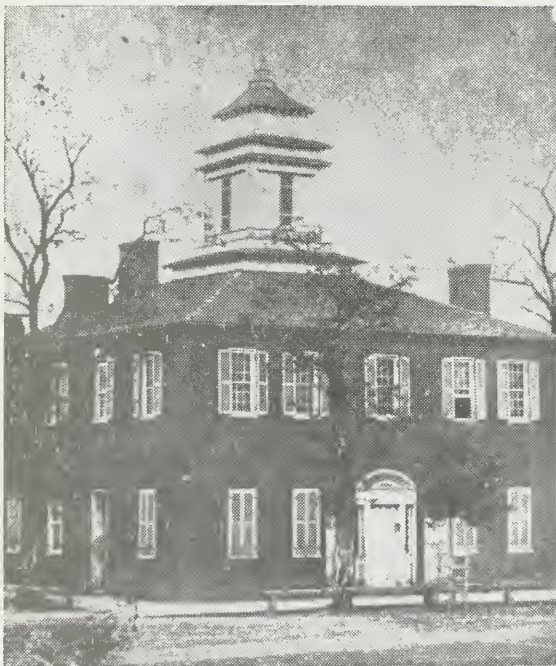
On a winter day the coachman's horn sounded as the stage drew up to the Robinson house. Out stepped the new Senator, six feet, four inches tall, auburn-haired, blue-eyed, 36 years old.

Into the coach he helped his wife Margaret—daughter of James Ratcliff—and their 10-month-old son, James.

There was more excitement in Carmi that summer. The new courthouse was almost completed. People stopped to stare and admire it. Windows were being installed, shutters hung. The window and door frames were of solid walnut. Offices were on the second floor.

The entire first floor, 40 feet square, comprised the courtroom. Two log fireplaces heated the chamber.

To this commodious room went the settlers to sing and pray, dance the Virginia reel and minuet, stage home talent plays and hold town meetings. For years the courtroom was used as a church, ballroom, theater and town hall.



FIRST COURTHOUSE. ERECTED 1828-1831



History walks and talks in this house to anyone who will listen. The General John M. Robinson House at the corner of Main Cross and Robinson Streets is one of the oldest residences in Illinois. Erected in 1814 by John Crow as a two-room log residence, it served as White County's courthouse prior to 1828. Purchased in 1835 by U. S. Senator Robinson, it was enlarged and beautified and became the meeting place of notable men, including Abraham Lincoln. Later it became the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Stewart and Miss Mary Jane Stewart, granddaughter of Senator Robinson.

The 1830's added up to a glorious decade for White County political leaders. Robinson, in the Congress, was mingling with Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, Davey Crockett, John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren.

Back home, others were rising in state politics. William E. Wilson was chief justice of Illinois. Edwin B. Webb served four terms in the House with Abraham Lincoln, became a close friend of Abe.

#### CARMIAN WAS LIEUT. GOVERNOR

Unlike his tall brother-in-law, Senator Robinson, Webb was a small man. He and Robinson were of elegant and courtly manners, true aristocrats from Virginia families.

Others who served in the Legislature were Dr. Josiah Stewart, William McHenry, Nathaniel Blackford, William Eubanks, John C. Goudy, John McCown, Alexander Phillips and Col. William H. Davidson.

Davidson was a wealthy merchant. He moved his family to Carmi from Virginia in 1830; took over the Leonard White residence. Into the big white house on the ravine he moved the expensive furniture he brought from the east.

Defeating McHenry for the State Senate, he was speaker of that house in 1836 when Alex Jenkins resigned as lieutenant governor. The Carmi senator then moved up to the second highest post in the state.

## *Ab Lincoln, a bridge and a depression*

A

AS THE 1830's faded a great event developed. The Little Wabash was about to be bridged! After 20 years of efforts, success was in sight. Benjamin M. St. John was awarded a contract in 1839. He started the following year.

Trees were felled in nearby woods. Heavy timbers and beams were hewed. Quarrymen cut stone from the river banks. Thirty masons kept busy building stone piers. The covered bridge was to be 300 feet long.

They worked fast, hoping to finish in time for a Whig rally set for September 1. The principal speaker was to be a Springfield lawyer named Abraham Lincoln.

### FLOOD RUINS BRIDGE WORK

Summer rains made the river rise that summer. The swirling waters swept away the false work from under the east span. Crash! That end of the bridge fell into the river and was washed downstream.

The Whigs were too busy to let that worry them. They sent word to all the counties in southern Illinois; urged people to come for the political rally and barbecue.

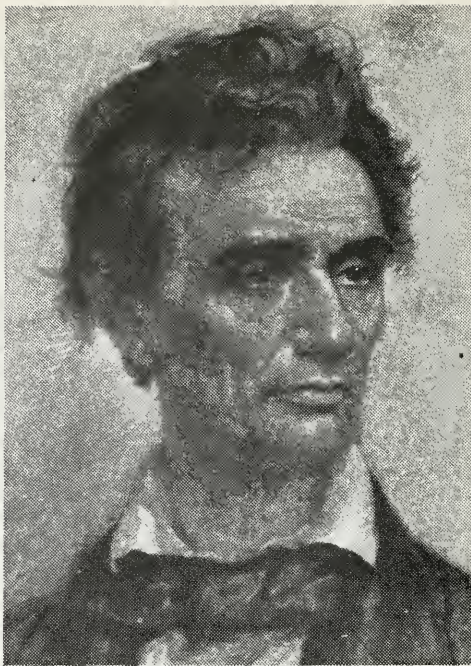
They were whooping it up for William Henry Harrison for President. Lincoln was a candidate for Presidential elector; planned campaign stops at Carmi, Shawneetown and Albion.

The great day dawned. Rain started falling. Even that didn't dampen the Whigs' enthusiasm. Down muddy, rutted roads from all directions came the people . . . walking, riding horseback, in carts and wagons drawn by horses and oxen.

"Whoopie!" "Tippecanoe and Tyler, Too!"

Wagons and carts were loaded with people and provisions. Beef, mutton, poultry, bread, cakes and pies for thousands were unloaded at Stewart's grove. Dr. Josiah Stewart lived in a double log house. It was 'way out in the country then, but now it's the corner of Third and Stewart Streets.

In the grove they had dug a barbecue pit. It was 600 feet long, two feet deep and four feet wide. Live hickory coals filled the trench, and over these the meats were prepared.



Abraham Lincoln looked much like this when he came to Carmi in 1840. A member of the Illinois House of Representatives, Lincoln was 31 years old when he hit the campaign trail for William Henry Harrison in the "Tippecanoe and Tyler, Too" campaign.

John Wilson was one of the marshals; deputized to conduct the Gallatin County delegation to the barbecue grounds.

"There were hundreds from Gallatin alone," he said.

A great parade was held, with the lead taken by a log cabin decorated with coonskins, mounted upon wheels and drawn by many yoke of oxen.

### JUSTICE WALKS TO TOWN

Chief Justice Wilson walked to town from his farm. His wagon was drawn by four yoke of oxen. Their horns were decorated with red, white and blue ribbons. They were fastened in gimlet holes bored through points of the animals' horns.

The judge walked beside the oxen as driver and his wife, Mary, sat in front of the wagon, which was loaded with provisions.

Despite the rain, the rally was a great success. Lincoln stood before the huge throng and spoke for more than an hour. That night he lodged at Ratcliff Inn, where he visited with his many friends.

The Whigs won a smashing victory, but it was in the face of a creeping depression. All over the nation banks crashed, factories closed, merchants failed, farm prices plummeted.

In White County business went bankrupt. Shelves were empty. Stores closed. A dozen places failed in Carmi. Only G. W. Webb & Co., Samuel D. Ready and W. H. Davidson weathered the storm.

Every business in Grayville folded. The stores had no merchandise, the taverns no liquor. Thirsty Grayville men traveled to the New Harmony distillery or to the Carmi taverns.

Farmers raised good crops, but there was no market for them. Most were sold to failing merchants who paid starvation prices with worthless notes.

A few farmers floated their products to New Orleans on flatboats. There they found low prices, but what cash they did get was in gold and silver. Returning they brought sugar, coffee, tea, rice and molasses.

#### BRIDGE COMPLETED AT LAST

The covered bridge was completed in the summer of 1841 but few could afford to pay the small toll to cross.



By 1842 the county was a shambles commercially. Three fourths of the business houses had failed. Everybody seemed to be suing somebody. Many lost their farms. Good work horses were taken from plows by constables and sold at sales for as low as \$8.

The suffering stirred the people religiously. Revivals started all over the county. Meeting houses were filled. People were broke but they clung to their faith.

The unrest caused a political upset. In the 1842 election Webb was defeated for the Legislature. John S. Lawler, a Democrat, beat him by 40 votes.

Gradually business improved. Prices inched upwards.

The Democrats hoped hard times would help them win in 1844, but the Whigs staged a comeback. Nobody came back stronger than Webb. He won election to the State Senate and Lawler, who had ousted Webb from the House two years earlier, was defeated by Reuben Emerson.

By 1849 business was humming. In the midst of prosperity, exciting news came from California. Gold!

Up and down Carmi's Main Street people gathered to talk about the rush westward. Gold fever broke out in taverns and crossroads stores.



The above pictures the first covered bridge across the Little Wabash River in Carmi, the conception of Mrs. O.L.s (Katherine St. John) Dill. Benjamin M. S. John was the architect and builder.

## *A rush for gold . . . roses and drums . . .*

T

HAT WINTER Asa Ross and his workmen were busy building light wagons. By spring, men were buying supplies, bargaining for young oxen. They paid \$30 to \$50 per yoke.

On May 29, 1850, Carmi's overland wagon train was ready. Thirteen men were up before dawn. Wagons were loaded. Oxen were hitched. Whips cracked on the morning air. California or bust!

People cheered as the oxen lumbered down the dusty street. The lead wagon was owned by James Shipley, Orlando Burrell, Tom, J. S. and Len Ross.

### THREE MONTHS ON WAY

Next came the wagon of Lemuel Land, Tom Shipley, Tom Vines, and James Kilbreth. The third was owned by Bill Little, John Ganley, Jim Shipley and Sylvester Rice.

Crossing the great plains and mountains, they passed skeletons of horses, oxen and cattle and broken wagons. They met Indians but, fortunately, all were friendly. After three months they arrived in California.

The Rev. Alfred Flower came from Albion in 1852 to hold a 16-day meeting for the Christian congregation. His sister took him to Phillipstown in her carriage. There he waited at the Hasty house for the midnight stage from Grayville.

It was 2:30 a.m. when the stagecoach rolled into town. The driver blew his horn and stopped at the home of Mrs. John M. Robinson, who was at the steps to greet the minister.

The meetings drew large crowds to the courthouse. The heat was so oppressive that August the people considered moving to a nearby grove. However, Carson Hay had an idea. He removed all the courtroom windows and stored them. The shutters were closed and the meeting room was much cooler. For 16 nights—including three Sundays—the meetings went on, with town and country people filling the courtroom.

In 1852 the Methodists erected the first church in Carmi. It was a small brick structure on Main Street, where the Ball Drug Store now stands. Methodists and Presbyterians both used the building.



Nobody struck it rich. After a year they started home. They boarded ship at San Francisco and sailed to Panama; walked across the isthmus along a narrow trail; took another ship to New Orleans; came up the Mississippi, Ohio and Little Wabash Rivers to Carmi.

On the way, Lemuel Land died at Lake Charles, La. He was buried there. Later, his family brought his body back to White County.

Carmi was growing apace. Eyes of the state focused on the town in 1852 when Edwin Webb was nominated for Governor. The Whigs named him by acclamation. He was defeated by Joel Matteson in the Democratic sweep that year.

Religious life was better organized. The Methodists formed a society in 1850; the Christians in 1851. The Presbyterians

had been organized since 1827. All three denominations took turns meeting at the courthouse.

### MUSIC COMES TO TOWN

The village resounded to music in 1855. The Carmi Brass Band was organized, with Prof. George Warren, of Evansville, as teacher. John Craw was the snare drummer. William Cook played the cornet. Michael Anderson beat the bass drum. Other musicians were H. L. Bozeman, W. H. Phipps, Thornton Bozeman, J. B. Craig, Otto Phefflin and Walter A. Rhue.

The town was spreading out. Attorney John M. Crebs built a large house at Stewart and Jessup. Two blocks south, at Main, Richard Jessup erected a two-story residence with mansard roof. John Storms a large brick business block on Main.



Left to right: Florence D. Wheatcroft, Louise Cook Winner, Mary Priscilla Brown, Margaret Patrick Kerney, Alice Mahala Organ, Pattie Webb Stewart, Mary Patrick Boyer and Harriet Ellen Pearce.

When the free school law was passed in 1856, people got busy. They elected Berry Crebs, Albert R. Shannon and Dr. E. L. Stewart to a school board. Samuel Slocumb erected a large brick schoolhouse on Fourth Street. J. L. Waterman was the first principal. The second was N. B. Hodsdon, with Miss P. L. Dewey as associate teacher.

Before the free school was opened it was a struggle for many to get an education. The term usually lasted three months and the cost—\$2 to \$2.50 per term—was high for many families.

Youngsters were expected to earn their school money. They dug ginseng, gathered nuts, chopped wood, hunted rabbits and caught coons.

Orlando Burrell chopped 10 cords of wood for James Ratcliff at 25c per cord to pay for a school term.

#### AH, THE 1850'S

Life was sweet and serene in the village in the 1850's. "Listen to the Mocking

Bird" was the song of the day. Many a Carmi swain thrilled to the words as he stood, bewhiskered and in swallow-tail coat, beside the organ in the parlor while a girl played and sang.

It was a time in the best society circles of fragile, low-cut evening dresses of gauze and illusion, and garlanded with roses, violets and honeysuckle. Blossoms trailed on the great distended skirts, and life was colorful and gay—even in a village of mud streets, with no sidewalks save for a few boards here and there.

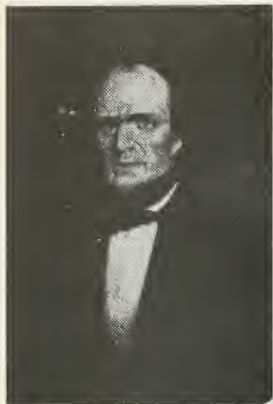
Gay young blades succumbed to the craze for mustaches, and almost to a man had ceased to shave their upper lips. Beards were plentiful, and in business and professional circles men dressed in black or blue broadcloth swallow-tail coats adorned with bright buttons.

As the decade ended, war clouds were gathering. Rumbblings of the storm echoed out of Springfield and Washington.

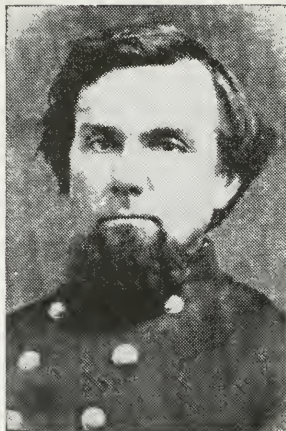
The South was threatening to secede—and Carmi's many people of southern ancestry shuddered at the thought.

## War and peace . . .

"Nothing is worse than war? Dishonor is worse than war. Slavery is worse than war."—Winston Churchill.



COL. JOHN WHITING



COL. JOHN M. CREBS



DR. DANIEL BERRY



COL. EVERTON J. CONGER

T

WENTY-ONE YEARS after he spoke in Carmi, Abe Lincoln was in the White House. Many of his old friends here were dead—Robinson, Ratcliff, Webb, Wilson, Davidson, McHenry.

Lincoln faced a seceding south, and the cannon that fired on Fort Sumter reverberated along the Little Wabash.

When news came of Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers excitement ran like lightning through the village. Answering immediately were Orlando Burrell, Frank Lindsay and L. S. Rice. They hurriedly organized men who were mustered in April 25 as Company D, Eighth Infantry.

Meanwhile, Attorneys John E. Whiting and John M. Crebs started organizing a regiment of volunteers. White County men thronged to the colors. Their Eighty-seventh Infantry was formally organized at Shawneetown Aug. 16, 1862, and mustered in Sept. 22.

Col. Whiting headed the regiment. Crebs was lieutenant colonel. George W. Land was major; John D. Martin, adjutant; Francis M. Coulter, quartermaster; Dr. Elam M. Stewart, surgeon; Dr. Daniel P. Berry, assistant surgeon. The Methodist minister, Albert Ransom, went as chaplain. Captains were James A. Miller, James Fackney, Edmund Emery, James E. Willis, John H. Wasson, Samuel J. Foster, Ross Graham, Benjamin F. Brockett, Sr., James P. Thomas, Martin Vaught, Thomas Eulow and William T. Prunty.

White County won an eminent place in the nation's record of volunteers, exceeding its draft quota by more than 700 men.

In blood and sacrifice, the toll was high with about 500 giving their lives in the struggle.

After peace came, one more was to die. He was Abraham Lincoln, assassinated on Good Friday 1865 by John Wilkes Booth in Ford's Theater in Washington.

Once more Carmi's association with Lincoln was to be recorded in the pages of history. Commanding the troops capturing the fleeing Booth was Col. Everton J. Conger, son of Carmi's Rev. Enoch Conger and brother of Attorney C. S. Conger.

Returning veterans picked up the threads of peace and once again wove themselves into the fabric of the community.

Carmi grew, slowly. The little brick church on Main Street was abandoned by Methodists and Presbyterians. Both denominations had alternated in using the building. At the corner of Church and Main the Methodists erected a tall white frame building with steeple. On First Street the Presbyterians built their house of worship. Members of the Christian Church completed their new building in 1867.

Business flourished and the town entered the 1870's with great expectations.

*Busy, busy town-- population 1,294 . . .*



This is one of the most valuable pictures of old-time Carmi. It shows the north side of the courthouse square on a snowy day in 1875. The original 1828 courthouse was only 47 years old. The Fireproof Building on the opposite corner was new. Back of that building stood a busy hotel. On the southeast corner, where the Williams house now stands, was a hitching post.



Horses pulling wagons plodded down snowy, muddy Main Street in the winter of 1875. The tall spire of the Methodist Church is seen at the left.

# H

**ARDLY 600 people lived in Carmi as the 1860's ended.**

The 1870's brought a boom. Population doubled in two years. Ephraim Joy and his sons, Thomas and Andrew, came from Bridgeport and started the Carmi Weekly Times.

Steamboats plied the Little Wabash and Skillet Fork. The Cairo and Vincennes Railroad was being built.

"Over 200 houses have been built here in the last year," said the Carmi Times in 1872. "Several fine new business houses are in process of construction."

The town had 6 boss carpenters; 5 plasterers; 6 bricklayers; 3 blacksmith shops with 2 to 6 smiths in each shop; 3 wagon shops; 2 tin shops; 2 saddle shops; 2 shoe shops; 2 tailor shops; 2 boss painters; 1 marble yard; 2 brick yards working 10 to 20 men; 2 sawmills; 1 stave factory with 12 hands; 2 cooper shops with 20 workmen; 1 woolen factory; 1 foundry; 1 grist water mill; a merchant mill; 8 dry goods stores; 2 shoe stores; 2 clothing stores; 4 family groceries; 2 drug stores; 1 hardware store; 1 confectionery and bakery.

J. M. Crebs was in Congress. His law partner back home was C. S. Conger.

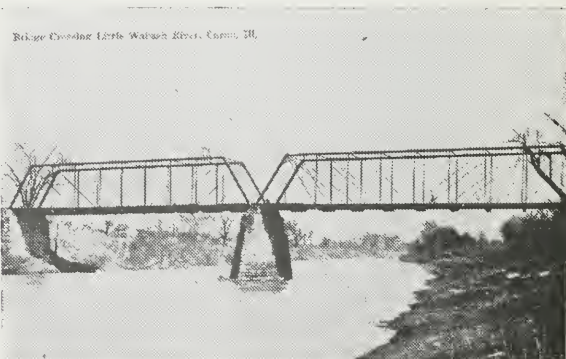
The Damron House was a busy place; offered good stabling, sample rooms for commercial travelers and a free omnibus to and from all trains. On Jan. 23, 1873, the Carmi Times said: "A sister of the late Stonewall Jackson stopped at the Damron House last Wednesday. She is on a visit to relatives in the county."



**THE REV. EPHRAIM JOY**



In the centennial year of America's independence—1876—Carmi built two fine brick schools, and they were used until they were replaced in the 1930's. At top, the South Side School. Bottom, North Side School.



The long covered bridge lasted only 38 years. Completed in 1841, it was razed in 1879 and this splendid iron span was built.

At Viskniski's St. Louis Store coffee sold four pounds for \$1; sugar, six pounds for \$1; coal oil, 40c gal.; crackers, 12c lb.; rice 12½c lb.; cheese, 20c lb.; cod fish, 8c lb.; cured ham, 15c lb.; a broom, 20c; bar of soap, 5c; pickles, 10c doz.

At Christmas time in 1872 Mr. Malone's book store advertised "Secrets of the Convent and Confessional," "Mormon Wife," "Three Years in a Man-Trap," and "Laws of Health and the Human Form."

The Carmi Times personals column had these items: "Mating time now. Splendid skating. Egg-nog times are here. Several of the boys were on a glorious bust Christmas day. Fireworks were heard all over town the past week. Bustles are said to have proved useful during the late slippery times."

In spite of the building and progress, Carmi was still a mud street town. Hogs wallowed in Main Street mud holes. A log cabin still stood where the Radio Building now stands at Main and Walnut.

Farmers coming to town for supplies often found their wagons mired deep in mud. It took an entire day to come to town and return home. Some stayed overnight. Graham's two-story hotel was where the Innovation now operates.

Food was plentiful and cheap. A housewife could buy a basketful of backbones and spareribs at Byrd Patrick's pork house for a dime.

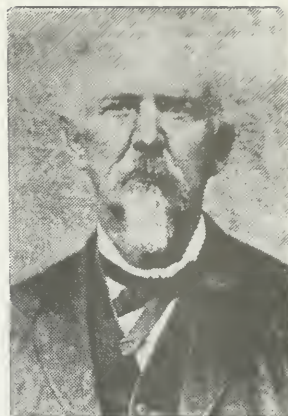
And then the village became a town. The people voted—135 to 106—to incorporate. In a lively election Dr. Elam L. Stewart was elected mayor, defeating Ross Graham.

As the town grew the Free School became crowded. Two-story brick schoolhouses were built on the North and South sides.

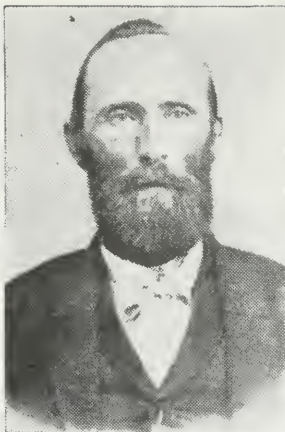
The covered bridge was demolished and an iron bridge built.

The White County Fair was organized. The Fair Association bought 40 acres 'way out in the country west of town.

Business and agriculture, education and religion were flourishing as Carmi greeted the 1880's.



**DR. ELAM L. STEWART**  
Carmi's First Mayor



**JAMES FACKNEY**



## *New courthouse, and a college . . .*



F

ARMERS COMING to Carmi in the 1880's were astonished at the changes. Their wagons and buggies rumbled over the new iron bridge.

The present city park at Main and Main Cross Streets was a hitching yard. There they tied their horses. Across the street the 1828 courthouse was being razed. A new two-story, towered courthouse was being planned.

The town's population had doubled again! From its 1,294 residents of 1873 the figure rose to 2,512 in the 1880 census.

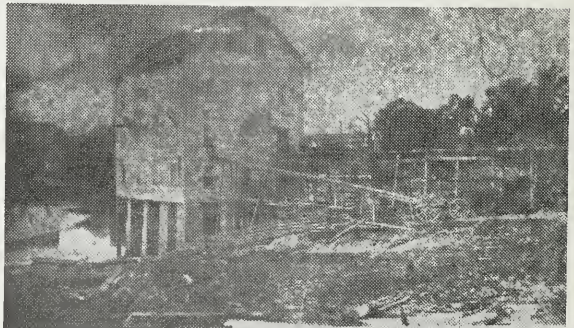
The George S. Staley mill was big business then. Every day it turned out 100 barrels of flour and 50 barrels of meal.

Harvey Crozier came to town and opened a large grocery at First and Smith Streets. A fine confectionery was started on Main by William Dietz.

There still were vacant lots on Main Street. They were popular meeting places for boys playing marbles and men holding political rallies.

The town had crept westward and extended to Plum Street. There, on the southwest corner, was built a two-story brick college with a tower. It was the new home of the Southern Illinois Normal School and Commercial College.

The school had been burned out earlier when a fire swept the Brockett building on Main Street.

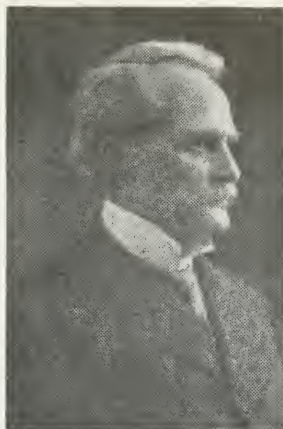


The town made progress through the decade with mayors named Orlando Burrell, George Wissinger, Frank E. Hay, Dr. John M. Minick and Simon Grant.

Carmi was a rough town in those days, especially on Saturday night. Saloons were crowded and fights were frequent on the streets. The Dollar Courier reported a general free-for-all one Saturday night with 50 men engaged in combat. Police were overpowered and no arrests were permitted.

The newspaper reported that a burglar reached into Tom Ary's sleeping room and pulled out a vest. In the pockets he found \$50 and Ary's false teeth. The vest and teeth were found hanging on a tree north of the railroad shops several days later.

The 1880's closed with C. S. Conger being elected circuit judge and James R. Williams going to Congress.



JUDGE C. S. CONGER



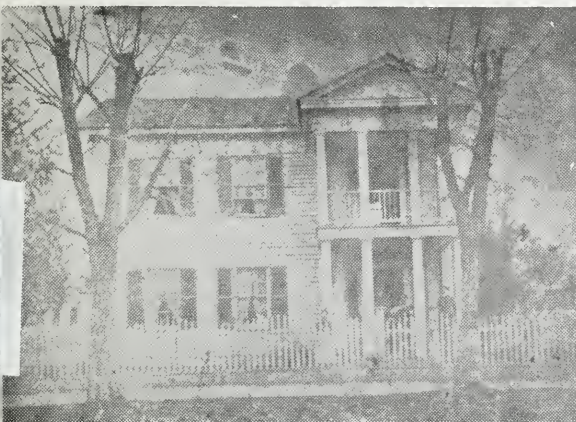
CONGRESSMAN  
JAMES R. WILLIAMS



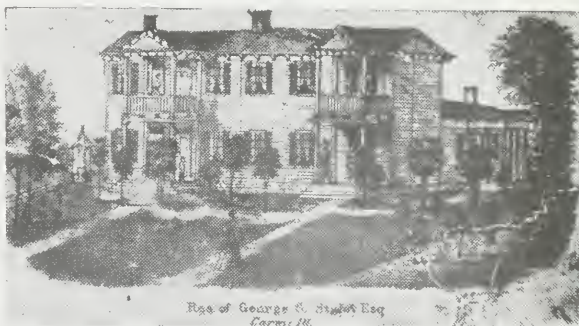
This home and general store of Mrs. Mary Shannon Williams' father, Albert R. Shannon, was replaced by the Victorian residence of Congressman and Mrs. James R. Williams. It is now occupied by Mrs. Robert Ready Williams.



John D. Martin's large residence was on Court Square.



The Byrd L. Patrick family lived in this house on Main Street, close to the present site of the Carmi Theatre. This picture was taken in 1888. The house was moved to Robinson Street and is now the Archer Apartments.



Residence of George E. Staley, the miller.

GEO. WILLIAMS

READER IN

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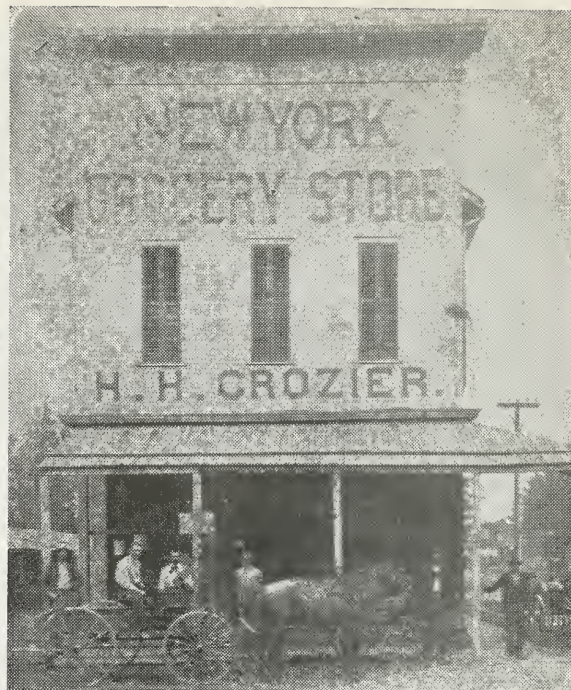
## JASPER PARKHURGE,

## ATTORNEY AT LAW

CARMI, ILLINOIS.

Respectful attention given to REAL ESTATE BUSINESS and Commercial Collections.

Remember the days of the dill pickle barrel? And the hoarhound candy in glass jars? And the cracker barrel and pot-bellied stove? And old Dobbin pulling the delivery wagon? You could see them all at Harvey Crozier's New York Grocery Store, top right, at Smith and First Streets back in the 1880's. Driving the wagon is Everett M. Robinson. Facing the wagon is Henry Stockhowe. To the right of Stockhowe is Fred Barth. Center, right, the Ziegler and Reinwald stave factory, a big industry here in the eighties and nineties. Second man on left is George Schauburger, father of Mrs. Laurence Boehringer. Bottom right, the Ziegler and Reinwald sawmill. Second from left, behind wagon, is Frank Leathers. At right, man standing in wagon in shirt sleeves is Ike Leathers. On far right is Enos Leathers. Second from right, Granville McMurray.



## *Ah, those wonderful nineties!*

*"All, all are gone, the old familiar faces."*

**T**HE PEANUT roaster chuffed in front of William Dietz's Main Street Confectionery. The toy clown on it bobbed up and down.

A caisson with a Civil War cannon stood in front of the Fireproof Building.

A dashing young doctor from Australia, William Brimble-Combe, made his rounds in a fancy buggy, pulled by a black horse named Joe Lee.

Fred Bair, Ed Mead, Miss Stella Schoemann and many others sped up and down the dusty streets on bicycles.

"Kid" Hacker wore a sandwich board advertising Coca-Cola in front of Dietz's.

It was a colorful, gracious, delightful decade; the days of the Gibson Girl with pompadour hair-do, puffed sleeves and billowing skirts.

Oh, the Nineties were gay, all right! Dances and kissing games became popular. Women started using face powder; colors and bright prints for dresses; large brooches and lavaliers.

In tune with the times, men wore striped and checked suits, gaudy ties, fancy vests, heavy watch chains, mustaches and derby hats.



William Dietz' peanut roaster in 1896.



Rateliff Inn was old in 1897. It had been standing for 69 years in this picture. Adjoining to right is A. Willis, photographer. Next is Stinson Bros. store.



Miss Stella Schoemann riding a bicycle on Church Street in 1896.

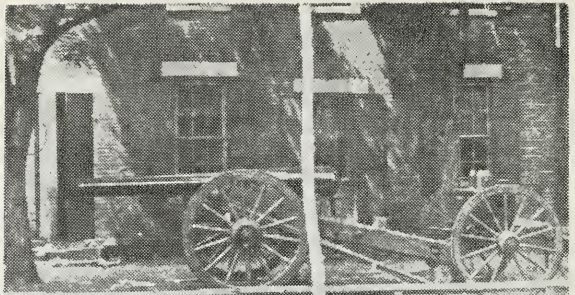


Kid Hacker advertising Coca-Cola in front of the Dietz restaurant in 1896.

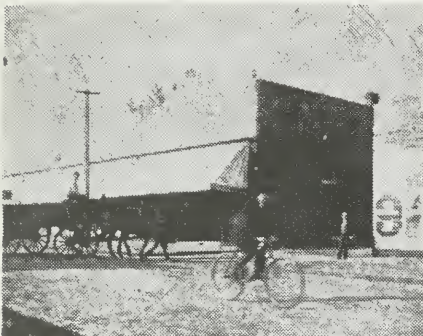
Best-seller novels became popular. People avidly read "The Prisoner of Zenda," "Trilby," "Quo Vadis," and "When Knighthood Was in Flower."

The town continued growing, with 2,755 residents in 1890. During the decade the mayors were Simon Grant, owner of a brickyard; George Wheatcroft, sawmill owner; Attorney Jasper Partridge, George Ziegler, manufacturer of staves, barrels and lumber; Harvey H. Crozier, merchant and grain dealer.

It was an era of lively tunes, at home, on the street and in the theater. Young and old liked to gather in the parlor around the reed organ and sing "Bicycle Built for Two," "After the Ball," "Sweet Marie," "Ta-ra-ra Boom de-ay," "The Bowery," "Sidewalks of New York," and "Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight."



Civil War cannon in front of Fireproof Building at Main and Main Cross Streets.



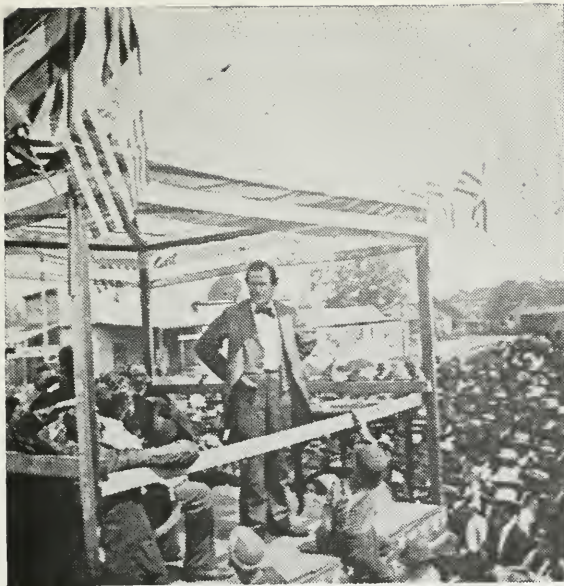
Ed Mead on a wheel on Church Street in 1896.



Fred Bair bicycling on Main. Residence on left was that of W. R. Archer; right, Joe F. Williams.



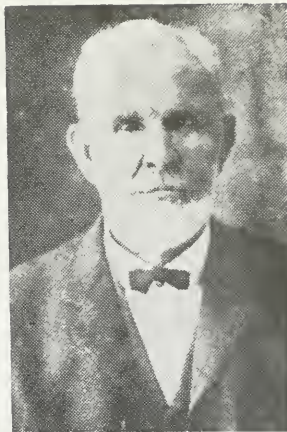
Horse and buggy doctor of the 1890's. Dr. William Brimble-Combe, who came from Australia, sits in his buggy behind Joe Lee on the river bank near the iron bridge.



William Jennings Bryan as he appeared in Carmi in 1896.

Charles P. Berry bought the Carmi Courier. Wust and Faulkner built the first electric light plant. Two new banks were organized—the First National, headed by James A. Miller, and the Farmers and Merchants, with William R. Cochran as president.

The Methodists and Presbyterians built new churches and Mrs. Morris Blasker organized the Home Culture Circle at her home on West Main Street.



Orlando Burrell, sheriff, county judge, Congressman, mayor.

In a political upset, Orlando Burrell, former sheriff, county judge and mayor, defeated James R. Williams for Congress in 1895, but Williams staged a comeback in 1899 and went on to national prominence.

William Jennings Bryan came campaigning in 1896. He spoke on a flag-draped platform near the depot and was photographed on the street with numerous Carmi people.

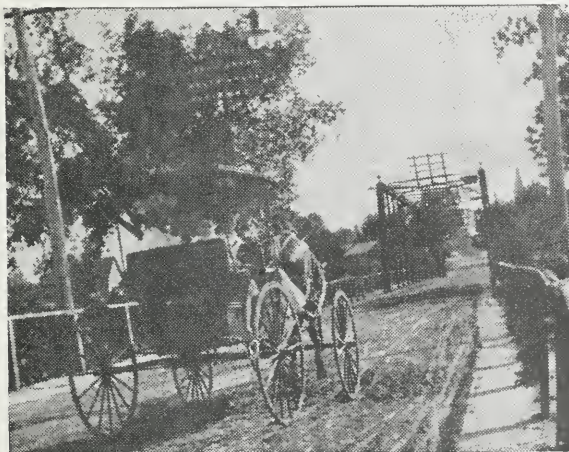
The streets were still muddy or dusty, depending on the weather.

Shoppers thronged to the stores owned by L. Haas, Morris Blasker, Stinson Brothers and A. Schoemann. For fancy groceries they went to J. J. Birdsong, Wittmer and Machenheimer, Stockhowe's New York Grocery and B. L. Patrick's. T. W. Brown had a busy meat market on Main, where the Hirsch store now stands, and on the Standard Oil corner we now know stood the fenced-in residence of the J. F. Williams family.

Will Rice had a thriving tobacco business. W. A. Ball opened his drug store on Church Street, close to a rising young dentist, Dr. A. S. Rudolph.

The Kerney and Stinnett mill was a big business on the river front and Steven Ecklerle's brick and tile works was booming.

"Remember the Maine!" was the cry in 1898 when America went to war with Spain, and once more Carmi men answered the call to the colors.



Surrey with the fringe on top — and old Dobbin doesn't mind the muddy road as he clip-clops toward the East Main Street bridge in Carmi.



Fun at Dietz's in 1895. Oh, that was the place to go 70 years ago! Posing clockwise, Mr. and Mrs. Claude M. Barnes, Mr. and Mrs. Berry Crebs, Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Crebs, Stella Haas and her brother, Erwin, Miss Molly Stewart, Joe Williams. The woman left center is unidentified.



In the old Opera House in 1898. These civic leaders presented a play, "The Destricks Schul," for the Home Culture Circle in its efforts to raise money to start a public library. The old Opera House was on the second floor of what is now the Carmi Furniture Store. Pictured left to right are, bottom row: Will Tully, Bob Silliman, Ira Funkhouser, Dr. Daniel Berry, George Meridith, Will Smith and Dr. Berry Crebs. Second row: Mrs. Albert Schoemann, Mrs. Mark Blasker, Mrs. Tom Poynton, Mrs. George Meridith, Mrs. Tom Hutchins, Mrs. Perry White, Mrs. Ira Funkhouser and Mrs. Ratcliff Webb. Third row: Mrs. Dave Rickenbach, Miss Laura Stinnett, Miss Ira Clayton, T. W. Hall, Mrs. Sophia Miller, Mrs. W. C. Smith, A. L. Patrick, Mrs. R. E. Pearce, Bradford Powell and Miss Jane Craw. Fourth row: Mrs. Felix Viskniskki, Sheriff Tom Hutchins, Mrs. Tom Hall, Mrs. Burnett and Mrs. P. A. Pearce. Top row: John Crebs, Mr. Burnett and Dave K. Rickenbach.

## *The turn of the century . . .*



T

HE OLD century ended on Sunday.

Carmi people held watch parties and church services as they bid farewell to the 1800's. Church bells rang in an era of peace and gracious living.

Lowry Hay, James Ratcliff and the other pioneers of 1816 would have rubbed their eyes in astonishment if they could have seen "their town" 84 years later.

Carmi's population had risen to 2,939! Life was pleasant and serene. Food was abundant, inexpensive and good. Business was booming. Carmi was the trade center for a large area.

In the first decade of the new century, two new banks were opened — The National Bank of Carmi in 1900 with John M. Crebs as president and the White County Bank in 1904, headed by Frank E. Pomeroy.

Durable, dependable old Orlando Burrell was mayor again at 75 and he served until he was 81. Under his administrations Main Street was paved with cobblestones from Main Cross to Church. Tom Poynton poured many concrete sidewalks to replace board walks.

Electric arc lights flickered at night. By day the drays, wagons and buggies clattered over the cobblestones. Hitching racks, blacksmith shops and livery stables were busy places.

The horse was king. Harness shops, sales stables, feed stores were open early and late. All over town residents had their own stables and carriage houses. Buggies

could be bought for as little as \$60. Some bought carriages costing as much as \$400, with rubber tires and graceful oil lamps.

The 1900's arrived with people singing "I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now," "A Bird in a Gilded Cage" and "By the Light of the Silvery Moon." Carmi people were reading "The Virginian," "Alice of Old Vincennes" and "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come."

Men started shaving off their mustaches and beards. Gillette invented the safety razor.

Dressmaking was big business and so was the millinery trade. Women wore fancy lace and scrim dust ruffles to protect their dresses. Waists and sleeves fitted tightly.

It was a decade of great events nationally. The Wright brothers proved that an airplane would fly. A one-cylinder Packard crossed the continent in 61 days. President McKinley was assassinated and Teddy Roosevelt came to power.

"Motormania" hit the country. A Reo auto could be bought for \$650 and Ransom E. Olds planned to build 430 one year. The two-cylinder Maxwell runabout was an immediate hit.

On the river bank near the bridge Joseph Weigant's mill ground busily away. West of there, where the Rice Motor Company now operates, James Cullison's general store was taking in poultry and eggs in trade.

Bernard Haen and his young partner Ernest Wehrle had a bakery on Brick (Church) Street and the Jahlreiss bakery was operating on Main.



Gone are the drudging women—they sing and smile  
instead,

And the cruel song of the whetstone, like the ghost of the  
past is dead;

The wheat is ripe in the upland, and the hay is snug in the  
mow,

And the only song as the days go by is the purr of the  
combine now.

'Way back; there's where I'd love to be,

Shet of each lesson and hateful rule,

When the whole round world was as sweet to me

As the big ripe apple I brung to school.



Party time on Stewart Street. The Albert Schoemann home at Third and Stewart Streets was a social center in the 1890's. This picture of young people there was taken in 1892.

Jack Cross was running a restaurant at Main and Walnut (where the First National Bank now stands) and next door was Hugh Trammell's barber shop. Jasper Dale's Drug Store was where the Shoe Mart now stands, and the Halk Auto location then was Schumaker's clothing store. East of that was the popular confectionery of William Dietz, now busier than ever as King's Confectionery.

Lee Rose had a barber shop next to Dietz, and where Sam Ziegler now does business was Blasker's Dry Goods Store.

Sonny Gumberts had a saloon in an old frame building on the site of the present White County Bank and in the same block was the L. Haas store.

Carmi ladies thronged to Mrs. Kuykendall's millinery shop, where the White County Abstract Company now operates, next to the City Park.

It was a decade of fun and frolic. The B.N.K. Club staged shows at the Opera House for the benefit of the Village Improvement Association. Folks thronged to the White County Fair in their buggies and carriages. The Thursday and Friday Clubs attracted the cream of society.

Nickelodeons drew people to flickering moving picture shows. It was a period of ragtime music and Sousa the march king.

People sang and hummed "Won't You Come Home, Bill Bailey?", "The Good Old Summer Time," "Sweet Adeline," "Meet Me in St. Louis," and "Shine On, Harvest Moon."

Attorney F. M. Parish and Claude M. Barnes followed Burrell as mayors. Barnes was a wealthy land owner and merchant.



**ROY CLIPPINGER**

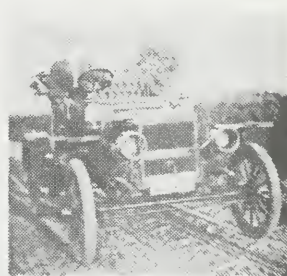
Editor, Congressman, Civic Leader

He pushed the paving of streets and for general improvements.

On May 6, 1909, a 23-year-old newspaperman came to town. Although there were two newspapers here already—the Carmi Times and the White County Democrat—Roy Clippinger started the Carmi Tribune in partnership with Lawrence M. Ross.



Those Easter bonnets! Ladies and little girls knew that the place to go was to Mrs. Kuykendall's millinery shop. It was a popular place in the first decade of this century. The building on Main beside the park now is occupied by the White County Abstract Company.



Remember the brass lamps on those wonderful Maxwells? Still in his teens, Matthew Land drives the family auto along a country road.

Clippinger had started setting type at 10 years of age. He worked for the Norris City newspaper owned by his father, A. C. Clippinger, then launched out for himself in Carmi.

A born leader, Clippinger was so industrious he worked day and night. Within two years he had merged his paper with the Carmi Times. He operated the Tribune-Times until 1929, when it merged with Judge C. S. Conger's White County Democrat. Clippinger and Conger were partners for several years in the Carmi Democrat-Tribune. The judge then sold his interest to Clippinger.

Editing the only newspaper in the county seat, Clippinger continually pushed

for Carmi's improvement. He got a bridge built at New Harmony, organized and headed the Greater Weeklies of America, converted his newspaper into a daily and was twice elected to Congress.

When he died Dec. 24, 1962, he left a new Carmi Times, a daily newspaper. He had been an editor here for 53 years and a newspaperman for 66.

As the first decade of the new century closed, Taft was President, the first model T was catching the public's fancy, the city's population had dropped a little and people were singing two of the most popular songs ever written, "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" and "Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life."



Washington's birthday party about 1905, in the home of Mrs. Frank E. Hay. Members of the DAR and Thursday Club are identified as, front row sitting, left to right: Mrs. Virginia Maltby (non-member), Mrs. Claud Barnes, Mrs. John M. Crebs, Mrs. J. W. Maffitt, Mrs. John C. Powell and Mrs. Charles P. Berry. Back row, standing, left to right: Miss Mary J. R. Stewart, Miss Catherine McClintock, Mrs. Berry Crebs, Miss Annie Conger, Miss Molly Stewart and Mrs. Roy E. Pearce.



THE FRIDAY CLUB IN 1906 — La! The ladies were lovely 60 years ago. Back row: Pearl Rice Ziegler, Berniece Schoemann, Evelyn Viskniski McCave, Kate Pomeroy Wilson, Nellie Boyer Pearce, Grace Caley Dietz and Ella Berry Barnes. Middle row: Emma Smith Boyer, Lena Patrick Conger, Vera Viskniski, Eileen Tuck Martin, Anna Tente Boyer, Ethel Martin Bullard and Lilly Smith Rich. Front row: Stella Schoemann Singer, Helen Conger Haas and Edna Haas.



Many still living remember the wonderful Innovation, meeting place for courtin' or a Coke; to listen to music amid the palms; to order a cherry phosphate from the wondrous soda fountain.

## Peaceful, tuneful, turbulent times

I

T WAS A pretty little country town in 1911. Shade trees lined the streets, offering cool comfort on hot and lazy summer days.

The player piano became popular and phonographs were all the rage. Ragtime music swept the country, with people singing "Alexander's Ragtime Band," "Ballin' the Jack," "Bugle Call Rag," "Lonesome Rag," and "Everybody's Doing It Now."

Carmi young people took up a new dance craze, the fox trot, and they hummed and sang "Oh, You Beautiful Doll" and "I Want a Girl Just Like the Girl." Sweet songs of the times were "Mother Machree," "Little Grey Home in the West," "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling," "After You've Gone," and "The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi."

Although the population had fallen (to 2,833) for the first time since 1890, business was good and times were prosperous.

Into office as mayor in 1911 went Thomas H. Land, owner of farms, a grain business and a dealer in loans. Carmi already had elected descendants of pioneers as mayors. Dr. Elam L. Stewart, elected in 1873, was a grandson of William Stewart who came here in 1816.

Frank E. Hay, elected in 1885, was a son of Daniel Hay, who was one of the founders of the town.

In the 1911 election the people chose the great-grandson of Robert Land, who came from South Carolina and settled on the Big Prairie in 1809, six years before White County was created.

Mayor Land had married Ada C. Melrose, of Grayville, and their children were Matthew and Elizabeth (Mrs. J. Robert Smith).

In those serene years before World War I the railroad depot was one of the gathering places of the town. People thronged there to see who left and arrived on trains for St. Louis, Evansville and Chicago.

The 1913 flood caused widespread damage and townspeople crowded to the river front to watch the swirling waters.



WHITE COUNTY CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION AND MOOSE CARNIVAL, AUGUST 3-8, 1914, CARMI, ILLINOIS

COMMITTEE		MEMBER BOTTLE MAKERS LAND	
T. W. HAY, PRESIDENT	CHARLES G. BROWN	DANIEL M. HENRY	ROBERT LAND
BORDE COCHRAN	HEISEL ARCHER	HENRY JONES	MOAH KUYKENDALL
FRED C. HUNTING	HARRY WHITE		JOHN HANNAH
WILLIAM B. HARTWICK			



The manager of the telephone company, John C. Stokes was elected mayor—and that was the year Carmi's Anti-Saloon League paraded down Main Street, flags flying and a band playing, to protest against the liquor traffic.

Harking back to pioneer days, the town held a White County Centennial Celebration and Moose Carnival August 3-8, 1914. The committee included T. W. Hay, president; Roscoe Cochran, Fred C. Puntney, Charles G. Brown, Hersel M. Archer, Harry White and William B. Hartwick.

Postcards issued by Kelley Staiger honored early pioneers named Daniel McHenry, Robert Land, Noah Kuykendall, Henry Jones and John Hanna.

On Monday, June 21, soon after dawn, Mrs. Carson Hughes was in her yard on West Main Street close to the iron bridge. She heard a crashing noise, looked up and saw the west span of the bridge collapse and fall into the river. Miss Effie Gray (Mrs. Herbert Bruce) and Charlie Green had just crossed safely when the bridge crashed.

News of the disaster spread fast. Small boats were assembled, then larger ones, to accommodate the public. Business men held conferences with county and city officials. A pontoon bridge was hurriedly built. By Oct. 6 a contract was awarded for a new span, which was dedicated August 8, 1916. It was called the Rainbow Arch bridge, made of 88 tons of steel and 10,000 bags of cement!

It was a time of peace and plenty, but Europe was at war and its influence was felt in Carmi. Farm prices rose and there was a demand for land, horses and mules. U. S. industries boomed.

People started singing an English war song, "Tipperary," and President Woodrow Wilson was trying to keep America out of the war.

All of a sudden, life changed. No longer were people singing "Pretty Baby," "The Missouri Waltz," and "When You Wore a Tulip." America went to war. Men were drafted. Army camps opened. Now it was "Over There," "You're in the Army Now," "K-k-k-Katy," "Goodbye Broadway, Hello France," and "Hinkey Dinkey Parlez Vous."

Mayor Frank Sibley, just elected, resigned and left his medical practice to enter the army. Ralph Benson became mayor in his place.

Land prices soared. Farmers worked day and night to raise food. Troop trains rolled away from the Carmi depot to the cheers and tears of friends and loved ones.



Fighting the saloons in 1913—flags waving and bands playing, the drys marched down Main Street April 15, 1913, in a protest against the liquor traffic. Many children joined members of the Anti-Saloon League in the march.



Carmi celebrating and parading on Armistice Day, November 11, 1917.

It was an era of glucose in place of sugar, Khaki and rolled puttees, Liberty loan drives and the disastrous influenza epidemic.

When it was all over, Carmi joined in nation-wide rejoicing. Early in the morning of November 11, 1918, news came of the German surrender.

A parade was organized. That afternoon Main Street was crowded. People cheered and sobbed with joy as they watched the decorated wagons and cars and marching throngs proceed down Main Street.

The happy, tuneful, turbulent, violent decade ended with Tom W. Hall, banker, taking over as mayor.

## *The roaring twenties . . .*

T

HEY STILL call it "the Roaring Twenties," but the decade didn't start out that way.

The war songs faded. People adjusted to peace; had a yearning for "the good old days." After their sacrifices in Europe, Americans started singing "Let the Rest of the World Go By," and "There's a Long, Long Trail A-Winding Into the Land of My Dreams."

In 1920 Carmi's population was the lowest since 1880, down to 2,667. Nobody worried because business was good. Dr. Sibley was mayor again and he was succeeded by W. F. Elliott, auto dealer, and Fred J. Reinwald, feed and grain merchant.

People played Mah Jong, listened to radios with horn speakers, read headlines about the Ku Klux Klan and the death of President Harding.

Suddenly, the "good old days" were only a memory. The jazz age dawned! Carmi girls discarded ankle-length skirts and bunched waists. The flapper appeared with bobbed hair, skirts to the knees and rolled silk hose.

Stately waltzes and polkas gave way to the Charleston and Black Bottom. Rudolph Valentino was the Sheik; Colleen Moore played at the Main Theater in "Flaming Youth;" Bayleys sold Ford runabouts for \$265.

Sweet, slow songs of 1920 were "Whispering," "My Little Margie," and "Tuck Me to Sleep in My Old Tucky Home." Now it was "Yes Sir, That's My Baby," "Doodle Doo," and "Jada."

A Kiwanis Club was organized and Attorney Joe A. Pearce was the first president. Dr. Ray McCallister opened a dental office in Norris City before moving to Carmi.

The worst disaster of the decade came Wednesday, March 18, 1925, when a tornado roared across the county, killing 27 and injuring 126. It destroyed 110 houses and took a damage toll of \$750,000.



JUDGE C. S. CONGER

That was the year 10,000 people came here to celebrate the opening of the hard road.

The Strand Theater opened with Mae Murray playing in "The Merry Widow." Rebstock Brothers were selling the Star auto. Clara Bow was the "It" girl. Fire swept a block on Main Street. Talking pictures thrilled the country.

Daredevil Olson sat on a flagpole high over Main Street. Phil Hanna presided over the hanging of Charlie Birger. Lou Emmerson defeated Len Small for Governor. W. A. Ball opened his Main Street drug store.

The Carmi weekly newspapers merged, with Roy Clippinger and C. S. Conger as partners.

The new age with faster tempo wrought changes in town. With better roads and many, many more autos, the horse and buggy almost vanished. More farm people moved to town. The population started rising; reached 2,925 by the close of the decade.



This picture was taken at 100th anniversary celebration of the Presbyterian Church, 1927. Front row, left to right: Mrs. Ethel Bee, Miss Enid Lewis, Miss Rose Mary Bee and Mrs. Charles P. Berry; second row: Dr. Berry S. Crebs, R. F. Hurley, Mrs. Charles Gibbs, Mrs. W. A. Ball, Miss Molly Stewart, Robert Finch and Ivan McCallister; third row: William C. Smith, Lillie Campbell, Mrs. Frank C. Sibley, Mrs. W. G. Boyer and Charles Randolph; fourth row: William Ball, John M. Crebs, Zachary Boyer, Henry Lewis, Chauncey Stewart Conger and Joe Fleming Williams. Only six pictured here are still living: Rose Mary Bee, Enid Lewis Thuermer, Mrs. Charles Gibbs, Ivan McCallister and Lillie Campbell Sillman.

In 1927 the Presbyterians celebrated their centennial. A pageant depicted the church's founding, with 21 in the cast. They were: Mrs. Roy E. Pearce, C. S. Conger, W. C. Smith, John M. Crebs, Mrs. W. A. Ball, Dr. B. S. Crebs, Joe F. Williams, R. F. Hurley, Z. T. Boyer, Ivan McCallister, Mrs. L. C. Berry, W. A. Ball, R. E. Finch, Mrs. Charles Gibbs, Mrs. Frank C. Sibley, Charles T. Randolph, Miss Lillie Campbell, Miss Mollie Stewart, Herbert Bayley and Mrs. W. G. Boyer.

The "talkies" came to the Strand Theater in "Broadway Melody." Dr. R. C. Brown moved here from Eldorado.

Oh, it was a tuneful, colorful decade with such songs as "My Blue Heaven," "Girl of My Dreams," "Old Man River," "Stardust," "Tea for Two," "Only a Rose," "Valencia," and "Happy Days Are Here Again."

Do you remember?

Ah, yes, and do you remember the ominous signs as the 20's faded? The stock market crashed October 24, 1929, bringing a fearful panic that caused the depression of the 1930's.

## *From country town to small city*

H

ISTORY never ends, but books do. This one is coming to a close.

In the 36 years between 1930 and 1966 Carmi changed from a country town to a small city. The population rose from 2,998 to 6,200.

Flappers and "sheiks" of the Roaring Twenties are grandparents now. They've told their children, now tell grandchildren, of the days gone by—when the New Harmony bridge was dedicated in 1930 . . . jobless men walked the streets in depression years . . . corn fell to 13c a bushel . . . banks closed . . . the WPA, PWA and CCC pumped money into the economy.

Carmi's three banks reopened after a holiday; people played miniature golf, worked jigsaw puzzles, pushed for progress under Mayors Fred J. Reinwald, Kelley P. Staiger, Jesse Grissom and Dr. George T. Proctor.

They built two new schools and went through the decade singing "Night and Day," "Easter Parade," "Who's Afraid of the Big, Bad Wolf," "We're in the Money," "Love in Bloom," "Pennies from Heaven," "A-Tisket A-Tasket," "Beer Barrel Polka" and "God Bless America."

Business was gradually improving in the late 30's when—boom!

Oil! Who would have dreamed that a billion dollars in petroleum lay under White County?

Excitement ran through Carmi like summer lightning. Strangers in western hats and high-heeled boots thronged the town. The courthouse and streets were crowded by lease hounds. Abstract offices and new restaurants opened. In 20 years 6,000 producing wells were completed.

In the midst of this excitement and prosperity, Pearl Harbor was bombed. America was at war again.

For four years the casualty lists poured in. There were war bond drives, scrap metal campaigns, rationing restrictions.

Through the war years C. F. (Bud) Rebstock was mayor, and he was succeeded by A. J. (Gus) Brandt.



IVAN A. ELLIOTT, SR.

Attorney General of Illinois 1949-1953

In the midst of blood, sweat and tears, people sacrificed and sang "White Christmas," "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To," "Oh, What A Beautiful Morning," "Mairzy Doats," "Surrey With the Fringe on Top," "Cruising Down the River," and "Sioux City Sue."

Hitler killed himself. Germany surrendered. Atomic bombs brought the Japanese to their knees. Then came the "cold war" instead of peace and it extended through war in Korea and Vietnam.

Roy Clippinger was elected to Congress in 1945 and 1947. Harry Truman came to town campaigning in 1948 and Ivan A. Elliott, Sr. was elected Illinois Attorney General.

A modern bridge was built across the Little Wabash. A new municipal building was erected at Main and Main Cross Streets.

J. Robert Randolph took over as mayor. He paved streets, enlarged the utility plants, watched Carmi's 1950 population of 5,522 rise to over 6,200 before the decade ended.

Laurence E. Boehringer, a business man who, was skilled in municipal affairs after years on the City Council, was elected mayor in 1964.

The little log village of 1816 was only a memory.



**Ratcliff Inn—before and after!** Dilapidated, decrepit, ill-treated and ugly, Ratcliff Inn was to be razed in 1960 and the property converted into a parking lot. The White County Historical Society raised enough money by public subscription to save the historic building where Lincoln lodged in 1840. The Society paid \$15,000 for the property and spent \$16,000 restoring the building. On the second floor is the White County Museum. Here members of the Society hold their meetings. Two first floor offices are rented. When the property is debt free the entire building will be used for a museum. Restoring the inn put Carrai on the Lincoln Heritage Trail, and it is visited by many tourists.





**LAURENCE C. BOEHRINGER**  
29th Mayor of Carmi



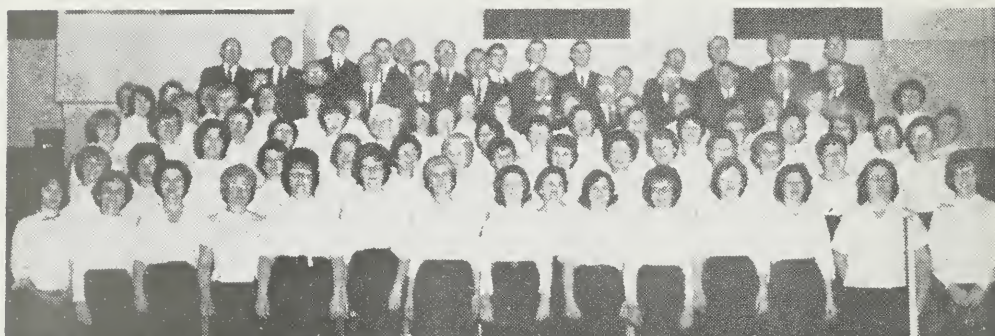
Carmi's official flag, designed by James William Henning.



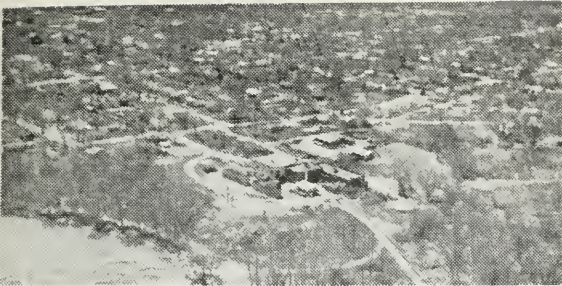
Three hundred students in a massed band opened Carmi's Sesquicentennial February 26 with a concert, playing for the first time "The Lincoln Heritage Trail," a concert march composed by Professor Paul W. Shahan, of Murray State University.



Hail to the Queen and her court! It was style show and beauty time in Carmi March 5. Three chapters of Beta Sigma Phi Sorority and the Home Culture Circle sponsored the event. Celebrating the 150th birthdays of both White County and Carmi, all girls of the county were welcomed to compete in the beauty contest. Out-of-county judges selected these winners: Center, Miss Marcella Tate, Grayville, first; left, Judy King, Carmi, fourth; Sharon Wilson, Grayville, second; right of Queen, Alice Morris, Norris City, third; Martha Morrill, Carmi, fifth.



A Sesquicentennial triumph! Just before the Easter season started the Sesquicentennial Chorus presented Handel's "Messiah" to a capacity audience. The oratorio was directed by John W. Brown. Mrs. Ray McCallister was general chairman and Miss Dorothy Mann was co-chairman.



See the dam in the Little Wabash? Close by, the city utilities plants and beyond, a residential area of north Carmi.



The railroad and U. S. 460 meet west of town, showing the plants of Sterling Aluminum and Weeks Manufacturing Co. Beyond, the blue of Griffith Lake and a residential area.



C. F. Rebstock's plane was about to cross South Church Street when he took this picture of downtown Carmi.



The high school and athletic field dominate this picture of a section of west Carmi. Lower right, College Boulevard of Montgomery Circles. Upper part shows many residences.

# *Mayors Of Carmi Since 1873 . . .*

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1873 Dr. E. L. Stewart, doctor, druggist, postmaster.   | 1901 Orlando Burrell.   | 1929 Fred J. Reinwald.  |
| 1875 Ross Graham, attorney.   | 1903 Orlando Burrell.   | 1931 Kelly P. Staiger, photographer.  |
| 1877 Leroy L. Staley, miller and grocer.  | 1905 Orlando Burrell.   | 1932 Jesse Grissom, poultry dealer, former sheriff, took over February 23, 1932, after an election contest. |
| 1879 Dr. Christian Cook, physician.   | 1907 F. M. Parish, attorney.  | 1933 Kelly P. Staiger.  |
| 1881 Orlando Burrell, contractor, county judge nine years, sheriff four years, Congressman two years, mayor three more years. | 1909 Claude M. Barnes, furniture dealer, land owner.  | 1935 Kelly P. Staiger.  |
| 1883 George W. Wissinger, druggist.   | 1911 Thomas H. Land, grain dealer, farm owner.  | 1937 Dr. George T. Proctor, dentist.  |
| 1885 Frank E. Hay, banker.  | 1913 John C. Stokes, manager of telephone company.  | 1939 Dr. George T. Proctor.   |
| 1887 Dr. John M. Minick, physician.   | 1915 Dr. Frank Sibley, physician.   | 1941 C. F. (Bud) Rebstock, auto dealer, oil and gasoline distributor.                                       |
| 1889 Simon Grant, owner of brick yard.  | 1917 Dr. Frank Sibley, who resigned to go to army. Vacancy filled on January 7, 1917, by Ralph Benson, who was in the milling business. | 1945 C. F. (Bud) Rebstock.  |
| 1891 Simon Grant.   | 1919 Tom W. Hall, banker.   | 1919 A. J. Brandt, farm implement dealer.   |
| 1893 George D. Wheatcroft, owner of sawmill.  | 1921 Dr. Frank Sibley.  | 1953 A. J. Brandt.  |
| 1895 Jasper Partridge, attorney.  | 1923 W. F. Elliott, auto dealer.  | 1957 J. Robert Randolph, engineer, auto dealer.   |
| 1897 George C. Ziegler, partner in barrel and stave factory.  | 1925 W. F. Elliott.   | 1961 J. Robert Randolph.  |
| 1899 Harvey H. Crozier, grain dealer.   | 1927 Fred J. Reinwald, poultry and feed dealer.   | 1965 Laurence C. Boehringer, semi-retired business man, auto salesman.                                      |

**CARM MEN WHO****SERVED IN CONGRESS**

Senator John M. Robinson	1831 - 1842
Representative John M. Crebs	1869 - 1873
Representative James R. Williams	1889 - 1895 and 1899 - 1905
Representative Orlando Burrell	1895 - 1897
Representative Roy Clippinger	1945 - 1949

**COUNTY AND PROBATE****JUDGES**

James Ratcliff	1816-1848
Solomon Vories	1848-1852
Reuben Emerson	1852-1856
William P. Garrison	1856-1864
George Williams	1864
William Thomas	1864-1868
Samuel H. Martin	1868-1873
Orlando Burrell	1874-1882
James R. Williams	1882-1886
Benjamin S. Organ	1886-1890
James C. Pearce	1890-1898
John N. Wilson	1898-1906
Thomas G. Parker	1906-1907
Julius C. Kern	1908
John A. Lopp	1909
Julius C. Kern	1909-1914
James M. Endicott	1914-1918
Ulys Pyle	1918-1922
James A. Walsh	1922-1926
F. M. Parish	1926-1934
C. S. Conger	1934-1942
Charles T. Randolph	1942-1946
Max Endicott	1946-1964
January 1, 1964 the County Judge became Associate Circuit Judge.	
Max Endicott	1964-

**CIRCUIT CLERKS**

James Ratcliff	1816-1848
Solomon Vories	1848-1856
J. B. Hinde	1856-1868
John D. Martin	1868-1872
Thomas K. Wilson	1872-1876
R. F. Stewart	1876-1879
Frank L. Stewart	1880
J. H. Shipley	1880-1881
John D. Martin	1881-1888
George R. Williams	1888-1896
John E. Stewart	1896-1900
Charles E. Hill	1900-1908
William Poynton	1908-1916
Otis Downen	1916-1920
Newt Arbaugh	1920-1924
Frank McGhee	1924-1940
C. C. Morris	1940-1944
Millage Carter	1944-1960
J. Gordon Dagley	1960-1964
William Sharp	1964-

**SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS**

R. S. Graham	1860-1863
J. I. McClintock	1863-1869
Ahart Harsha	1869-1873
James I. McClintock	1877-1885
Commodore White	1885-1891
Thomas Fuller	1891-1895
Everett McCallister	1895-1907
Val W. Smith	1907-1914
James Smith	1914-1915
Charles Mossberger	1915-1919
D. L. Boyd	1919-1923
R. E. McKinnies	1923-1927
Harry E. Puntney	1927-1939
Hubert Sutton	1939-1951
Walter L. Puckett	1951-1955
Harry E. Puntney	1955-1959
Richard Travis	1959-

**STATE'S ATTORNEYS**

Thomas C. Brown	-----
John M. Robinson	-----
Edwin B. Webb	-----
Aaron Shaw	-----
Edwin Kitchell	-----
L. J. S. Turney	1851-1852
James S. Robinson	1852-1860
John M. Crebs	1860-1864
Thomas S. Casey	1864-1868
R. W. Townsend	1868-1872
J. I. McClintock	1872-1876
F. A. Pearce	1876-1884
John W. Hon	1884-1888
F. A. Pearce	1888-1892
Francis M. Parish	1892-1896
Isaac Spence	1896-1904
William L. Martin	1908-1912
C. S. Conger, Jr.	1912-1913
Joe A. Pearce	1913-1920
Charles T. Randolph	1920-1924
Joe A. Pearce	1924-1928
James M. Endicott	1928-1932
H. C. McKinney	1932-1936
Ivan A. Elliott	1936-1942
Albert McCallister	1942-1948
Kenneth Pearce	1948-1952
William South	1952-1956
Henry Lewis	1956-

**SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS**

John Phipps	1835-1846
Wm. S. Hay	1846-1847
Henry P. Anderson	1847-1848
Alex F. Trousdale	1848-1851
R. S. Graham	1851-1860

**TREASURERS**

Daniel Hay	1816-1819
Benjamin R. Smith	1819
John McHenry	1819-1824
James Higginson	1824-1828
George McHenry	1828-1830
David Philips	1830-1832
Nathaniel Blackford	1832-1834
John McCoun	1834-1836
Nathaniel Blackford	1836-1838
Milton E. Gowdy	1838-1840
William Little	1840-1844
James T. Ratcliff	1844-1849
D. Hay	1849-1851
Joseph Meador	1851-1853
J. B. Byram	1853-1857
J. S. Anderson	1857-1859
Thomas J. Renshaw	1859-1863
A. R. Logan	1863-1867
Michael S. Brockett	1867-1869
James B. Allen	1869-1871
B. F. Logan	1871-1877
James H. Shipley	1877-1878
E. W. Gaston	1878-1882
A. S. Harsha	1882-1886
S. J. Wilson	1886-1890
Thomas J. Mathews	1890-1894
L. S. Blue	1894-1898
William A. Raglin	1898-1902
George W. Clark	1902-1906
John Wilson	1906-1910
Jess Grissom	1910-1914
Fred Puntney	1914-1918
Charles Frazier	1918-1924
Edwin Spence	1924-1926
W. W. Williams	1926-1930
Edwin Spence	1930-1933
Martin Ziegler	1933-1934
Paul A. Ziegler	1934-1938
W. L. Gowdy	1938-1942
Baylus Hargrave	1942-1946
Roscoe Duckworth	1946-1950
Walter Brown	1950-1954
W. D. Morris	1954-1958
Raymond Spence	1958-1962
J. T. Gwaltney	1962-

**SHERIFFS**

Benjamin R. Smith	1816-1820
Daniel Hay	1820-1824
George B. Hargrave	1824-1830
Hosea Pearce	1830-1840
John Phipps	1840-1846
John B. Blackford	1846-1848
Abraham C. Miller	1848-1850
D. G. Hay	1850-1851
George R. Logan	1851-1853
William S. Eubanks	1853-1856
John G. Powell	1856-1858
T. W. Stone	1858-1860
John G. Powell	1860-1862
T. W. Stone	1862-1864
Thomas J. Renshaw	1864-1866
J. D. Martin	1866-1868
D. P. Eubanks	1868-1870
Hail Storms	1870-1874
Thomas I. Porter	1874-1878
D. P. Eubanks	1878-1880
Leroy L. Staley	1880-1886
Orlando Burrell	1886-1890
Wyatt Williams	1890-1894
John B. Hutchison	1894-1898
Gene Ackman	1898-1902
Joe Connery	1902-1906
Jess Grissom	1906-1910
Charles Frazier	1910-1914
George Morgan	1914-1918
Charles Gibbs	1918-1922
Oscar Phillips	1922-1926
Jess Grissom	1926-1930
Charles Gibbs	1930-1934
Chester Pyle	1934-1938
Tommv Thomas	1938-1942
Noel McCullough	1942-1946
Kenneth Cole	1946-1950
J. D. (Bud) Griffith	1950-1954
Kenneth Cole	1954-1958
Norwood F. Proctor	1958-1962
Charles Frazier	1962-

**CORONERS**

T. W. Stone	1850-1854
T. R. McClelland	1854-1856
Samuel Moore	1856-1860
E. W. Gaston	1860-1862
Wesley Hilliard	1862-1864
M. M. Doyle	1864-1866
Wesley Hilliard	1866-1874
Gilbert Asbery	1874-1876
Jonas J. Hon	1876-1878
A. G. Foster	1878-1880
William Truex	1880-1892
Barnabas B. York	1892-1896
R. A. Mayhew	1896-1900
James A. Boyer	1900-1904
George Staiger	1904-1906
Pierre DeLain	1906-1908
J. A. Boyer	1908-1920
Clinton Staley	1920-1924
J. A. Boyer	1924-1928
Leroy Stein	1928-1932
R. C. Brown	1932-1936
Leroy Stein	1936-1942
I. E. Turner	1942-
W. O. Walker	1942-1944
Herman Kittinger	1948-1956
Milas Cozart	1956-1964
Bernard York	1964-

**COUNTY CLERKS**

James Ratcliff	1816-1848
Isaac Mitchell	1848-1851
R. S. Graham	1851-1864
John G. Powell	1864-1870
William H. Pearce	1870-1880
John R. Kuykendall	1880-1890
William P. Tuley	1890-1899
Edgar Brown	1899-1906
Matthew Martin	1906-1926
Clyde P. Stone	1926-1933
Raymond Austin	1933-1942
Charles B. Lamp	1942-1954
John L. Whetstone	1954-

## DEDICATION

When Carmi's Bicentennial is celebrated in the year 2016, eyes will turn to this page of Carmi's Sesquicentennial book, "Glimpses Down the Decades."

They will see the names of those who sponsored this book by paying \$25 each to help defray the cost of publication. Because of their generosity no advertisements were necessary.

In appreciation, the Carmi Sesquicentennial Commission dedicates this book to them.

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Mr. and Mrs. Allen Ball  
Mrs. Lizzie Barnes  
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M. Pauline Pomeroy  
Judge Ulys Pyle  
Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Rebstock  
Mildred Land Reinwald  
Elizabeth Land Smith  
Sterling Division of Federal-Mogul  
Dr. and Mrs. Edwin Stocke  
Ann Land Taylor  
Louise Land Twilla  
Two Tony's Smorgasbord  
East Main Street, Carmi  
Mr. and Mrs. Henry J. Wallace  
Mr. and Mrs. Ivan White  
Williams Amusement Company  
Senator and Mrs. Paul A. Ziegler

## TIMES TO REMEMBER...

### WINTER

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, Carmi Township High School — White County Massed Band Festival, with 300 high school and junior high musicians from Grayville, Crossville, Norris City, Omaha, Enfield and Carmi. Premiere performance of the "Lincoln Heritage Trail" concert march composed for Carmi's Sesquicentennial.

SATURDAY, MARCH 5, Washington School gymnasium — Style show with old and new fashions, sponsored by three chapters of Beta Sigma Phi Sorority and the Home Culture Circle; beauty contest to choose the Sesquicentennial Queen, Miss Marcella Tate, of Grayville.

### SPRING

SUNDAY, MARCH 27, Washington School gymnasium—Community presentation of "The Messiah" two weeks before Easter, with over 100 voices and 15 members of the Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra. John W. Brown, director, Mrs. Ray McCallister, general chairman, Miss Dorothy Mann, co-chairman.

MAY 13-15—Spring convention of the Illinois State Historical Society, with tours, receptions and banquets. Principal speaker, Chet Huntley, of NBC News.

### SUMMER

MONDAY, JULY 4—All-day celebration of old-fashioned Fourth of July at White County Fairgrounds. Sponsored by Carmi Civil Defense. Festivities and barbecue all day, with fireworks display at night.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, AUGUST 13 and 14—Old-time threshermen's reunion at White County Fairgrounds.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17 — Special Sesquicentennial show at White County Fair, headlined by Jo Ann Castle of the Lawrence Welk Show.

### FALL

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14 AND 15 — Fall festival with shows, tours, contests, climaxed by Kiwanis Corn Day and historical parade.







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